POLICE CORRUPTION CHARGES STAYED, PG 3

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Last-ditch appeal for Conrad Black

COURT Conrad Black is taking his fight to the U.S. Supreme Court in a last-ditch appeal that, if successful, could grant him the vindication he has long dreamed of and cast doubt on a controversial law used to trap white-collar criminals.

Black has been serving a 6½-year prison term at the federal prison in Coleman, Fla., for fraud and obstruction of justice.

His lawyers have readied an attack that focuses on the right to honest services — a concept developed to convict corrupt politicians who were seen as defrauding the public of their "honest services" as public servants — and whether it should apply to private conduct.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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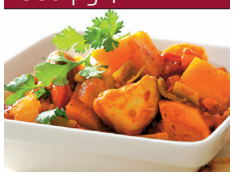

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Raptors **Blast from the past**

RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto Raptors Hedo Turkoglu laughs yesterday as he talks to the media in a retro Toronto Huskies uniform. In the foreground is a Turkoglu bobble head doll that will be given out with heritage ticket packages. The Raptors will unveil their Huskies uniforms tonight against the Minnesota Timberwolves at the Air Canada Centre. More coverage, page 30.

Wasted welfare?

Grits overpay $1.2B for aid programs: AG

Ontario does a poor job of determining who is eligible for welfare and disability supports and, as a result, overpayments are on the rise with the government doing little to reclaim that money, the auditor general said yesterday.

Overpayments to both the Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Works have increased dramatically since those programs were last audited, for a cumulative total of $1.2 billion wrongly going out the door, Jim McCarter said.

"I don't think enough attention is being paid to make sure that we're only giving money to people who are eligible to get money," the auditor general said after releasing his annual report.

"Public funds are often not being spent with enough due diligence and oversight."

The government said there was already $1.1 billion in overpayments when the Liberals came to power in 2003, but admitted the situation has grown since then.

The disability program paid out $3 billion last year to about 250,000 people. The total amount of overpayments since the auditor last examined the program in 2004 increased 37 per cent to $663 million, McCarter said.

Jim McCarter

"We have a situation where some people who may be ineligible are being approved to receive benefits anyway because the government hasn't followed its own screening procedures," he said.

The auditor said governments have to treat taxpayers' money like it was their own and politicians must set the example for civil servants.

The Opposition said the auditor's report is proof the Liberal government is not doing a good job of managing taxpayers' money.

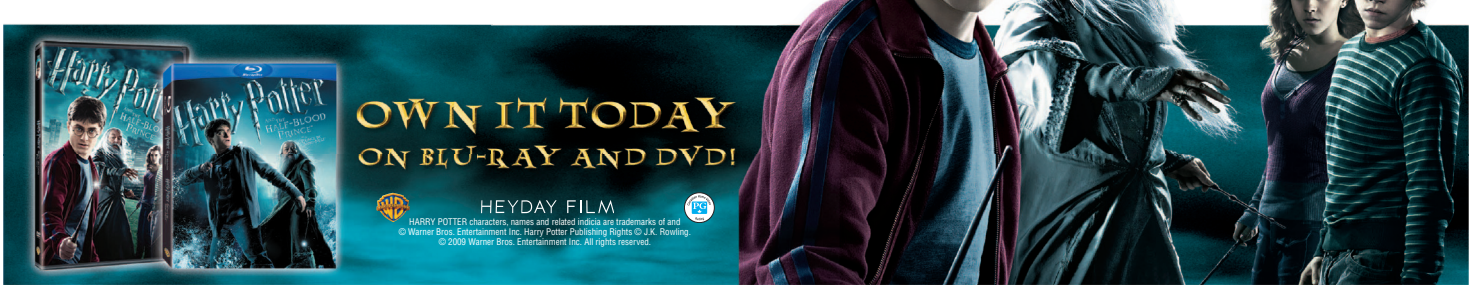
THE CANADIAN PRESS
MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 4

Highlights of auditor general's report

Some highlights from auditor general Jim McCarter's report:

- Thousands of bridges in Ontario are not being adequately inspected.
- About $500 million in provincial fees from alcohol, gaming and registration services could be in jeopardy because they amount to a tax not established by legislation.
- Government user fees have not increased in 20 years in some cases, and could raise another $500 million if they were set to recoup total related services costs.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Local

Cops make cold case arrest

Toronto police have made an arrest in an alleged sexual assault on a 12-year-old girl that was reported to have taken place in the early 1980s. Police allege the girl was assaulted at the man's apartment. Joe Munzer, 49, of London, Ont., was arrested Friday. He is charged with several offences, including rape, intercourse with a female under 16 and sexual interference.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Tomorrow's Metro

West View Paul Sullivan brings the West's perspective on Canadian events to Metro's pages.

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Video Economy of Newfoundland town hit hard by EU ban on Canadian seal products at **metronews.ca/movies**

Your Money Allan Small on what impact America's surprising unemployment numbers could have on the markets at **metronews.ca/investing**

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Charges stayed against cops

Court delays reason three men not tried for corruption

Corruption charges have been stayed against three Toronto police officers, including the son of the city's former police chief, who said the ruling upheld his faith in the justice system.

William McCormack Jr. and former police union boss Rick McIntosh were accused of accepting money from bars in return for warnings about raids.

Superior Court Justice Bonnie Croll stayed the charges yesterday against the two men and a third officer, George Kouroudis, because of delays in bringing the case to trial.

All McCormack would say following the ruling was, "I'm fine."

His lawyer, Jay Naster, welcomed the decision.

"We are obviously relieved at the outcome and very appreciative to the courage that her honour has shown in making this decision today," Naster said.

The charges were laid in the wake of an investigation that led to allegations that cops were taking bribes from downtown clubs.

MICHAEL STUPARYK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

William McCormack Jr. is shown leaving the University Avenue courthouse yesterday after a court decision stayed charges of corruption against police officers.

The charges against McCormack, the son of former police chief Bill McCormack, and the others included influence peddling and breach of trust.

"Every case has its own particular challenges and there were aspects of this case that were particularly complex, perhaps more so than others," said special prosecutor Jeffrey Manishen.

"I have been involved in wiretap cases myself in the past. But there were aspects of this case that happened to be more complex."

The elder McCormack was on hand for the ruling.

"During my 41 years in policing, I've always had faith in the administration of justice," he said.

"Justice has just been spoken just now. My faith has still been upheld."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bryant trial put over to new year

CHARGES A criminal court case involving former Ontario attorney general Michael Bryant has been put over until Jan. 22.

The former political star did not appear in the Toronto court dealing with his case yesterday, but was represented by his lawyer.

Bryant faces charges of criminal negligence causing death and dangerous driving causing death in a collision involving a cyclist in August.

Police say bike courier Darcy Allan Sheppard died after grabbing onto a car in Toronto following an altercation with the driver.

Since Bryant once appointed judges and oversaw Crown prosecutors, Vancouver lawyer Richard Peck has been brought in to prosecute the case.

An out-of-province judge is expected to preside over the trial once it begins. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Opioid-related deaths claim more lives than HIV: Study

Accidental deaths due to opioid use in Ontario have soared over the past couple of decades, increasing dramatically after a new long-acting version of the drug oxycodone — sold as OxyContin — hit the market, a new study suggests.

Opioid-related deaths claim more people in Ontario than HIV, with 27 in a million people dying from an opioid-induced overdose in 2004 versus 12 in a million from HIV, the researchers reported yesterday in the Canadian Medical Association Journal.

Lead author Dr. Irfan Dhalla said there's been a suspicion among physicians deaths due to prescription opioid use were on the rise, but this was the first effort to quantify it in Ontario. He admitted the effect was greater than he anticipated.

"When you think about the fact that there are far more people dying from prescription opioids than from HIV, that to me is surprising," said Dhalla, who practises general internal medicine at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto.

He and others said similar problems, though in some cases caused by other prescription opioids, are probably being experienced in other parts of the country.

A leading addictions researcher, Benedikt Fischer, said the situation has worsened since 2004, the end of the period studied by Dhalla and his colleagues.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

What the research says

- The study examined trends in the prescribing of opioids in Ontario from 1991 to 2007 and went over coroners' reports of deaths in which opioid use was listed for the same period.
- During that time, all opioid-related deaths doubled, to 27.2 per million in 2004 from 13.7 per million in 1991. But after OxyContin was added to Ontario's provincial formulary in 2000, deaths involving oxycodone increased fivefold. (In post-mortem toxicology testing, it's not possible to distinguish OxyContin from oxycodone.)

65-year-old faces drug charges

Police are accusing a 65-year-old man of being a drug dealer after finding two guns, some cocaine and a stash of ammunition at his Upper Beach home. James Pickering faces 11 charges, including unauthorized possession of a restricted weapon and possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Infanticide conviction overturned

Court of Appeal acquits mom 13 years later

After living with the term baby killer for 13 years, Sherry Sherret-Robinson's exoneration came in a flash yesterday, as the Court of Appeal for Ontario acquitted her of infanticide and pronounced her wrongfully convicted.

She was convicted in 1999 of her four-month-old son's death three years prior, due in large part to evidence of then-eminent pathologist Dr. Charles Smith.

Both the Crown and defence told the court Monday that new expert evidence "conclusively refutes critical aspects" of Smith's opinion that little Joshua was asphyxiated and that the death was suspicious.

He found evidence of a skull fracture where the other experts found none, and neck hemmorhages Smith referred to were in fact caused by Smith himself during the autopsy, the experts said.

After conferring for just 20 minutes, the three-judge Appeal Court panel returned to the courtroom and had barely sat down when they pronounced Sherret-Robinson acquitted, a verdict that "will be a surprise to no one," they said.

"The appellant's conviction was wrong and she was the victim of a miscarriage of justice," the judges said.

Sherret-Robinson's lower lip quivered as the judges told her: "You were wrongfully convicted."

To hear those words, exonerating her of deliberately smothering her four-month-old son Joshua 13 years ago, was a great sigh of relief, she said.

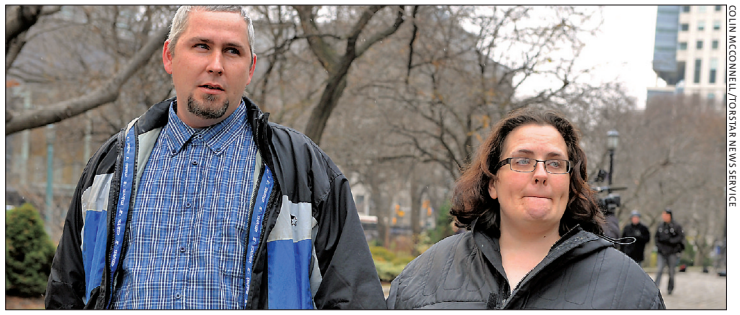
"It lifted a huge weight off my shoulders," Sherret-Robinson said outside court.

The autopsy findings and the fact that Joshua had numerous layers of blankets under, around and on top of him, "reasonably support the conclusion that death occurred by an accidental asphyxial means in an unsafe sleeping environment," said Dr. Michael Pollanen, Ontario's chief coroner, in a report filed as fresh evidence.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Two children lost

- Her lawyer for the appeal, James Lockyer, noted that Sherret-Robinson didn't just lose one child, she lost two — almost three. Her older son, now 15, was taken away from her and put up for adoption, and she was days away from losing her now four-year-old daughter when she first contacted Lockyer a few years ago.



COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sherry Sherret-Robinson, pictured here with fiancee Aaron Weese, was exonerated of infanticide yesterday by the Ontario Court of Appeal. Sherret-Robinson was convicted in 1999 in connection with the death of her four-month-old son. The conviction was based largely on the flawed testimony of pathologist Dr. Charles Smith.

Loophole leaves $500M at risk: AG

REPORT More than a quarter of the $2.2 billion in user and service fees collected by the province each year may be in jeopardy due to a legal loophole, the province's auditor warned yesterday.

About $500 million in fees for alcohol, gaming and registration services could be considered unlawful due to a 1998 Supreme Court of Canada ruling, auditor general Jim McCarter said in his annual report.

"We're concerned that a significant chunk of government revenues may be at risk because the province hasn't taken action to address the issue by passing the necessary legislation," McCarter said in a release.

"This is a pressing issue that the government should move quickly to clear up."

It's estimated that less than 75 per cent of the total cost of related services were recouped last year through user fees, amounting to a shortfall of more than $500 million.

TONY BOCK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tim Hudak

It appears that part of the problem is the rates aren't updated regularly, and some fees haven't changed for 10 to 20 years, the report noted.

The report also raised concerns about OntarioBuys, a group purchasing program, which the government has touted as a big money saver, even though it hasn't actually kept track of where the cash is going.

OntarioBuys, which is managed by the Finance Ministry, also failed to follow up on sole-sourced contracts handed out to consultants on their dime — a problem that also plagued eHealth Ontario, McCarter said.

The report reveals serious problems with one of Premier Dalton McGuinty's "pet projects," said Opposition Leader Tim Hudak.

"Instead of savings, the auditor general confirms that this initiative has been riddled with improper use of consultants, questionable accounting practices and lack of government oversight," he said.

It's just another example of the kind of "out-of-control" waste and mismanagement that resulted in the eHealth scandal, Hudak said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ministry of Health overspending for medical devices without enough oversight, report says

MARKUPS There's little oversight and a lot of waste in an Ontario government program that helps pay for wheelchairs and other medical devices such as hearing aids and electric scooters, auditor general Jim McCarter said yesterday.

"I can't give you a dollar figure, but it would certainly be in the millions of dollars." Jim McCarter, auditor general

The province's spending on assistive medical devices skyrocketed to $347 million last year, up more than 90 per cent since the last audit in 2002, and the Ministry of Health is paying huge markups for some of the items, said McCarter.

"We feel they're overpaying, and significantly overpaying," McCarter said after tabling his annual report.

"I can't give you a dollar figure, but it would certainly be in the millions of dollars that they're overpaying."

The government needs to act like any other consumer seeking big ticket items and shop around for the best price, advised McCarter.

"In our opinion, clearly they could be acquiring these devices for a lot less money." **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Bridge safety rules lacking teeth: AG

ROADS The Ontario government knows too little about the condition of most bridges in the province — which could be a big road-safety issue — and isn't following its own rules in inspecting them, the auditor general warned yesterday.

Municipalities maintain 80 per cent of the province's 14,800 bridges, but the Ontario government doesn't have the power to make sure they're inspected every two years, auditor general Jim McCarter said in his annual report.

McCarter stopped short of saying the bridges posed a safety risk.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

EDUCATION An agency set up to boost student achievement isn't always funding schools based on their need, the province's auditor general says. The auditor general's report says only 85 per cent of the $340 million given to the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat in five years went to help school boards meet targets. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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London transit workers reject contract offer

Striking transit workers in London, Ont., have rejected the latest contract offer from the city's transit commission. The Amalgamated Transit Union says 78.5 per cent of the 410 workers who cast ballots voted against the offer. THE CANADIAN PRESS

G20 summit a boon for tourism

The president of the Greater Toronto Hotel Association says the G20 summit will be an economic boon for the city.

Terry Mundel says the event next June will mean up to $17 million in hotel room revenue alone, and that doesn't count food, beverages and entertainment.

He estimates there will be 40,000 to 50,000 "hotel nights" to provide accommodations for all the people in town for the meeting of the world leaders.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who is in South Korea, announced yesterday that Toronto will host the G20 summit June 26 and 27.

The site was moved to Toronto from the Huntsville area after concerns surfaced that the smaller Ontario venue could not provide all the resources necessary to stage such a huge event, while leaving the cottage country town to still host the smaller Group of Eight summit several days before.

50,000

The G20 summit in June will mean up to 50,000 "hotel nights" will be needed within the city to host those in town for the meeting of world leaders.

Mundel says he's not overly concerned about security risks at the hotels, saying they deal with movie stars, senior politicians and high-profile celebrities every day.

Hosting a G20 summit implies finding at least 10,000 hotel rooms and providing air-tight security for more than 30 international delegations. Huntsville has 1,000 rooms at most.

In September, global leaders decided at the G20 summit in Pittsburgh that the G20 would replace the G8 as the leading international body for economic matters. The move formalized a major shift in global politics that has seen emerging economies such as China, India and Brazil challenge economies such as the United States and Europe for supremacy.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

GO Transit told to slow down near residences

TRANSIT Residents living near the Toronto West Diamond rail junction say their lives are about to get a whole lot quieter since the Canadian Transportation Agency has ordered GO Transit to resort to slower but less intrusive pile-driving techniques.

The need for speed in completing the project that GO says will enable it to run more trains up the Georgetown line doesn't overrule the rights of residents who have been subjected to bone-rattling vibrations and noise since the grade separation project began in January, the agency said in a final decision Monday.

GO maintains it has already implemented many measures being ordered by the agency, including the use of pile-driving technology from Japan and France and better communications with residents.

But it is well behind schedule on the project, originally expected to be finished this month. With only 70 per cent of the 2,400 piles installed, GO spokesperson Vanessa Thomas said it's unclear when the work will be finished. GO recently told residents it would be at least next summer.

The quieter pile-driving techniques mean only two to four piles can be installed daily, compared with six to 10 using the traditional pounding method.

The grade separation — which allows one track to pass over another — will benefit the community, Thomas said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Response

- Under the order, GO is also required to monitor and report noise and vibration levels, and inform residents two weeks ahead what kind of work will occur.

News in brief

AUTOPSY Police have confirmed that a woman found dead in her St. James Town apartment was bludgeoned to death. An autopsy released yesterday found Spring Phillips, 26, was killed by blows to the head and neck. An ex-boyfriend found the woman dead Saturday when he stopped by to take her shopping. Police said there were signs of a struggle. Levi Aggek, 33, is charged with first-degree murder.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MuchMusic **The show goes on**

MUCHMUSIC PHOTO

MuchMusic VJ Sarah Taylor sits down yesterday with Hedley on MuchOnDemand. The pop-punk quartet, which hails from Abbotsford, B.C., recently released its third album, The Show Must Go.

Poverty advocates want HST changes

TAXES Poverty advocates say they're not against the merged sales tax as long as it comes with the right conditions to help the province's poorest residents.

Greg deGroot Maggetti of the 25 to 5 Network for Poverty Reduction says taxes are important to fund public services, which are key at a time of recession.

But he says he's worried about what that will mean for lower-income households, and wants to ensure the right tax cuts are in place to offset the impact of any higher tax. He added there are five key things the government can do to make sure the HST doesn't hurt the poor, including staggered tax credits, outreach efforts to ensure credits are being used and the exclusion of basic goods and services.

He was testifying at the last day of public hearings into the HST, set up after opposition protests and negotiations.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

PC opposition

- The hearings went on despite efforts to derail the legislation by the Progressive Conservatives, who on Friday came up with amendments to the bill to create a 13 per cent sales tax next summer.

Musicians pay tribute to Jacksoul frontman

MUSIC Prominent Canadian music stars gathered in Toronto last night for a benefit concert for Haydain Neale, the former frontman for Jacksoul, who died of cancer two weeks ago.

Nelly Furtado, Jim Cuddy of Blue Rodeo, Ben Kowalewicz of Billy Talent, k-os, and Chantal Kreviazuk and Raine Maida performed.

Haydain Neale

Neale died Nov. 22 at the age of 39 after a seven-month battle with lung cancer.

His career had previously been sidelined in the summer of 2007 after he was involved in a serious traffic accident, after being hit by a car while driving his Vespa motor scooter.

About a month before Neale died, the band announced it would be releasing SOULmate, its first album since the accident. The CD was released about a week after Neale died.

Neale's bandmate Davide Direnzo says preparing for the tribute concert had been emotional, as the band practised its songs again but with different singers taking the microphone.

"We're honoured that these artists have given their time ... and they've all done the tunes incredible justice — and we kind of felt Haydain's spirit in the room," Direnzo said hours before the show.

"Just to hear another voice over these tunes was quite an emotional experience."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Metals company budgets $2.9M for expansion

Toronto-based Thompson Creek Metals Company Inc. is budgeting US$298 million for capital expenditures in 2010 to expand the Endako Mine project and proceed with maintenance and upgrades postponed to conserve cash in 2009. THE CANADIAN PRESS

PHOTOS.COM

An international study that included doctors at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children appears to shed new light on children's cancer.

Sick Kids doctors contribute data for tumour research

An international study that included doctors at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children appears to shed new light on a particular type of brain tumour in children that often proves deadly.

"We have the potential for a new diagnostic tool for a very aggressive type of brain tumour," said Dr. Annie Huang, senior author of the study published Monday by the journal Cancer Cell.

Because these tumours, known as CNS-PNETs, are extremely rare — there are only two or three found in patients at the large pediatric hospital each year — Huang asked hospitals around the world to contribute samples. In the end, the researchers managed to gather 46 tumours, and found they had good data for 40 of them.

It's the largest collection of this tumour type ever looked at, said Huang, whose team examined the genome of the tumours.

"In normal cells you always have two copies of DNA, and in tumours they tend to lose or gain parts of DNA," she explained. "And those usually tell you important locations for genes that are sort of driving a tumour process or not, or something that is maybe associated with a tumour."

"What we found was that about a quarter of our tumours had this very unusual area, where it had many copies of this particular area. I say area because it encompassed more than one gene."

When the researchers looked closely, they found 34 regular genes, as well as two clusters of a "very newly described class of genes, called microRNAs," she said.

"We have the potential for a new diagnostic tool for a very aggressive type of brain tumour."
Dr. Annie Huang

They believe these clusters represent a marker for highly aggressive disease in children under age four, which is typically fatal.

"There are two applications we're looking towards — one of them is using this as a diagnostic marker to pick up this group of highly aggressive tumours," said Huang. "And then secondly, my lab is interested in developing therapies against this specific type of molecule."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Debunking the bad blood myth

CBS Having lost a relative to Canada's tainted blood scandal, Lorne Neudorf understands the importance of a safe blood supply. He hopes a recently revised Canadian Blood Services policy, allowing gay men to register to donate stem cells, will change how all blood and blood product donations are handled.

"We no longer have the justification to exclude an entire subset of the population based on the myth that by somehow excluding men who have sex with men we eliminate the change of HIV/AIDS transmission in the blood supply," said Neudorf, 27, who recently began the process of joining the network of potential stem cell donors.

In October, the CBS began allowing men who sleep with men to join their 250,000 strong Canadian donor pool for stem cell donations. In the past, that admission would be an immediate disqualifier, as it is for gay men to give blood.

Jennifer Philippe, director of the CBS's OneMatch Stem Cell and Marrow Network, said about 100 men who would have previously been rejected have registered.

"What other registries are doing is by defaulting and not allowing these valuable donors to join they are really limiting the options available to the patient," said Philippe.

Blood tests are conducted to rule out HIV or any other infectious diseases, but Phillipe said that no screening test offers 100 per cent assurance. CBS does "testing that is down to the RNA level, so detection of a virus is very, very good."

Neudorf, who filed a human rights complaint against the CBS when he was rejected for blood donation in British Columbia 2006, said testing is so advanced that sexual orientation in and of itself is not a logical disqualifier for blood donation.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Tonight at 8
CBC

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Only at the Hudson's Bay Company.
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Shop early. Don't be disappointed. No rain checks & no price adjustments. Offers available while quantities last. Selection will vary by store. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Savings are off our regular prices, unless otherwise specified. See in-store for details.

Ecstasy bust results in drug charges against three men

Three Toronto men are facing drug charges after police recovered thousands of ecstasy pills near the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. Officers found 23,540 ecstasy pills along with more than 80 grams of marijuana when they searched a home early Sunday morning. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Google to include Twitter, Facebook posts

Google is tapping into the growing popularity of social networking by integrating tweets and Facebook updates into its search results, as it enables users to search for the web's freshest content.

The new feature, launched yesterday, is called "real-time search" and allows results to be sorted by when they were posted online, which puts more emphasis on new content such as news articles, blog postings and Wikipedia updates.

Updates on social networking sites will only make their way into search results if Facebook users, for example, have flagged their profiles as public, Google said.

The search engine also hopes to roll out features that will do away with the need to type in a query. A team of Canadian Google employees had a hand in creating the new Google Goggles feature, which allows users to take a photo with their mobile phone and use it as a search entry. For example, the feature could be used on streets to pull up information about local businesses, or at tourist destinations to get history about landmarks.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Regionally-appropriate searches

- Google is also tailoring its search results on mobile phones to take into account where a user is located. For example, users in Halifax and Vancouver searching for "grocery store" would get different, localized search results.

Banks must cut majority holdings in Alpha: TMX Group CEO

TRADING Regulators should force the big brokerage owners of Alpha Trading Systems to reduce their holdings to a minority stake in order to keep stock exchanges fair and competitive, the head of the TMX Group says.

"The question is, should parties who potentially have a conflict control a marketplace? My view is they shouldn't," said chief executive Tom Kloet in an interview yesterday.

"I'm not suggesting anybody's manipulating anything, but that is the danger I think is out there."

Alpha Group, which includes Alpha Trading Systems, was established in 2007 by the brokerage arms of Canada's six big banks as well as Canaccord Capital Inc., the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board and Desjardins Securities Inc.

Kloet made the comments following a speech at the Canadian Club of Toronto, where he discussed the competitiveness of the country's securities exchanges and their presence on the international market.

Kloet said that his concern is not over ownership of the ATS, but rather the controlling stake held in it by Canada's biggest brokerages, which are almost all owned by the country's largest banks.

"For the capital markets to continue to evolve in the best way, absolutely parties with conflicted interests shouldn't control exchanges," he said.

Kloet stepped back when asked how exactly the regulators should make changes.

"I believe that the neutral position of a marketplace is valuable," he said. "I'm not going to tell them (the regulators) how they should get there."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chartwell increasing ownership

local 9

Chartwell Seniors Housing Real Estate Investment Trust has signed a deal to acquire the remaining 50 per cent interests in two portfolios of retirement properties. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Brampton Chrysler plant to stay open

Windsor, U.S. factories face holiday downtime

The Chrysler plant in Brampton will continue to operate its assembly lines while workers in Windsor and four U.S. plants stay home for an additional three days of pre-Christmas downtime.

The Windsor plant, operating a full three shifts with 4,600 employees, will close the three days before Christmas and the first two weeks of January.

The plant in Brampton, where some 2,800 people work, will close the first two weeks of January, as previously announced, said Leon Rideout, president of Canadian Auto Workers union local 1285 in Brampton.

"We're going to be very rigorous in matching up our production with demand for vehicles."
Max Gates, Chrysler spokesperson

But after reports it would see an additional down time, he called the company and said he was told the plant would not close before Christmas.

"I called the plant and they said 'why would we shut down three days when we're actually working a couple Saturdays in December?'" he said.

He added there will be two extra down weeks in January at the plant for scheduled upgrades and retooling.

Chrysler spokesman Max Gates said some plants would experience extra downtime, but would not say which ones or for how long.

"We are very firm in our intention to not build vehicles unless there is demand for those vehicles," he said. "We're going to be very rigorous in matching up our production with demand for vehicles."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

City OK's billboard tax, fraction of money may go towards arts

FUNDING Toronto has approved an outdoor sign tax that will generate $10.4 million annually from roadside billboards, large signs on buildings and rooftops, and other advertising.

The tax, along with new regulations governing what types of signs are allowed and where, was pushed by arts advocates as a source of revenue for arts projects.

But council decided to put $1.4 million of the money into civic beautification and the rest into general coffers for next year while the budget committee and council ultimately decide.

That means councillors who wanted to spend that money on other projects, from graffiti eradication to hockey rinks, will have time to make their case.

Devon Ostrom, a spokesman for the arts lobby, brushed that concern aside. "I'm confident it's going to go to the arts because the budget committee has the moral responsibility at this point," he said. "The tax wouldn't exist without the arts community coming forward and pushing for it, or even inventing it in the first place."

But Councillor Kyle Rae, who sits on the budget committee, warned he can't offer guarantees.

"I can't give them that because council is supreme, and council waffles and prevaricates and changes its mind whenever the wind blows in another direction," said Rae (Ward 27, Toronto Centre-Rosedale).

RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A woman strolls through Yonge-Dundas square past all the ads. City council yesterday approved a tax on billboards.

Councillor Joe Mihevc (Ward 21, St. Paul's) was more reassuring. He said the city was simply following normal procedure by routing the revenue through the budget process.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Off our regular prices.

Selection varies by store, while quantities last.

December 8th until December 10th

the Bay

Man killed after collision with truck on highway

A 39-year-old unidentified man is dead after being hit by a tractor-trailer yesterday morning on Highway 400 in Barrie, Ont. Provincial police say they don't know why the man was in the right lane of the highway just before 5:30 a.m. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Manitoba upgrading polar bear jail

Manitoba is spending more money to upgrade a polar bear jail in Churchill. Conservation Minister Bill Blaikie says the province is spending $105,000 to improve the jail's walls and main entrance. The compound is used to house wayward polar bears that get too close to the town or return to the community after being scared away.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Activists storm Parliament

Greenpeace members push for tougher emission cuts

Go Green

Red-faced Mounties are reviewing their practices after an embarrassing security breach in which 19 Greenpeace protesters managed to climb two of the Parliament buildings and unfurl huge banners in broad daylight.

The activists, donning coveralls and white hard hats, scaled the West Block and the entrance to the Senate in the Centre Block at about 7:30 a.m. yesterday.

Some of them then rappelled off the steep roof of the West Block and hung massive banners in English and French reading: Harper/Ignatieff Climate Inaction Costs Lives.

It was a message to the prime minister and the Liberal leader to support tougher greenhouse-gas emission cuts, timed to coincide with the start of the big UN climate-change conference in Copenhagen.

Mounties, parliamentary security, Ottawa police, firefighters and ambulances watched the scene unfold, but didn't intervene immediately, apparently for safety reasons. Officers eventually escorted the activists from the roof and used an aerial ladder to remove others dangling on the side of the West Block.

FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The 19 protesters and an organizer were arrested without incident and turned over to Ottawa police. They will likely face charges of mischief, a police spokesman said.

Even tougher security is the likely outcome of yesterday's protest. Every time Parliament Hill security is threatened, the RCMP take steps to make sure such breaches don't occur again, said RCMP spokeswoman Cpl. Caroline Poulin.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 18

Top: Greenpeace protesters drape a banner on the Parliament buildings in Ottawa yesterday. Bottom: Police arrest a man after the protesters unfurled their banners.

Pressure grows on Tories as climate conference kicks off

Go Green

COPENHAGEN A sobering poll and a massive petition turned up the heat on the Harper government yesterday over its climate-change position as a major United Nations conference began in Copenhagen.

Climate negotiators sounded each other out as the 12-day summit opened in the Danish capital. Delegates from 192 countries sought common ground on an international treaty to curb the planet's pollution.

The conference came as a new poll suggested a majority of Canadians want a deal done in Copenhagen.

The federal Tories say they won't sign any agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol unless developing countries also adopt tough targets.

But 64 per cent of respondents to a Canadian Press Harris-Decima survey said rich nations have a responsibility to commit to higher and harder targets than developing countries. Most want to see a binding agreement come out of Copenhagen as well.

Also yesterday, environmental groups released a petition signed by more than 150,000 Canadians calling for urgent action on climate change.

"Canadians are sending a clear message to the Harper government — we want climate action, we want to be part of the solution," Maude Barlow of the Council of Canadians said in a statement.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

150,000

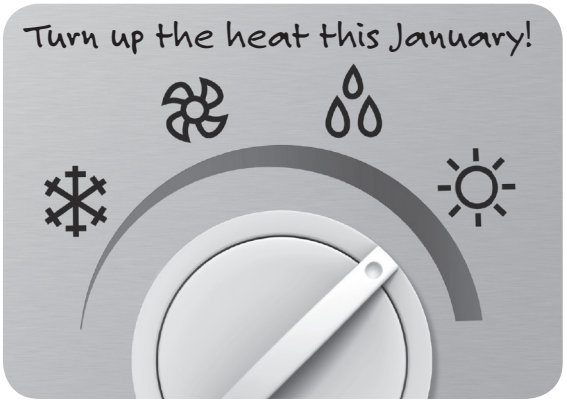
The number of Canadians who signed a petition calling for urgent action on climate change.

News in brief

QUEBEC The Parti Québécois issued the sovereigntist call to arms on the climate-change issue yesterday, arguing that if international sanctions are eventually imposed on environmental laggards, "Canada's irresponsible position" could hurt Quebec industry.

OILSANDS An independent study suggests that pollution from Alberta's oilsands is nearly five times greater than official estimates. The study says toxic emissions from the controversial industry are the equivalent of a major oil spill repeated every year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Turn up the heat this January!



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CUBA
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EL SALVADOR
$679
SAN SALVADOR
Royal Decameron Salinitas ★★★★
All Inclusive – 7 nights
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Add taxes & fees $242

LA ROMANA
$699
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Catalonia Gran Dominicus Cameleon Select ★★★★
All Inclusive – 7 nights
Mon, Jan 4, 11, Add taxes & fees $320

PUNTA CANA
$699
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
IFA Bavaro Village Resort & Spa ★★★★
All Inclusive – 7 nights
Mon, Jan 4, 11, 18,
Add taxes & fees $320

RIVIERA MAYA
$749
MEXICO
Ocean Maya ★★★★
All Inclusive – 7 nights
Fri, Jan 8, 15, 22,
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RCMP arrest man after standoff

Nova Scotia RCMP arrested a man following a four-hour standoff at a home outside Halifax. Police spokesman Cpl. Joe Taplin said the 66-year-old man, who had barricaded himself inside a home, was arrested by officers from the RCMP emergency response team as he tried to leave the area. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Harper looks to East for opportunity

PM says Canada offers natural resources that can help fuel Asian economies

Canada must look to the East for economic opportunities because its traditional trading partners, the U.S. and Europe, will be mired in slow growth for some time, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said yesterday as he wrapped up his visit to South Korea.

Harper said Asia is becoming the world's economic engine and Canada has the natural resources the region needs to fuel its economies.

"We have every reason to believe that the markets in the United States and Europe ... will probably experience continued slower growth for some time to come," Harper said.

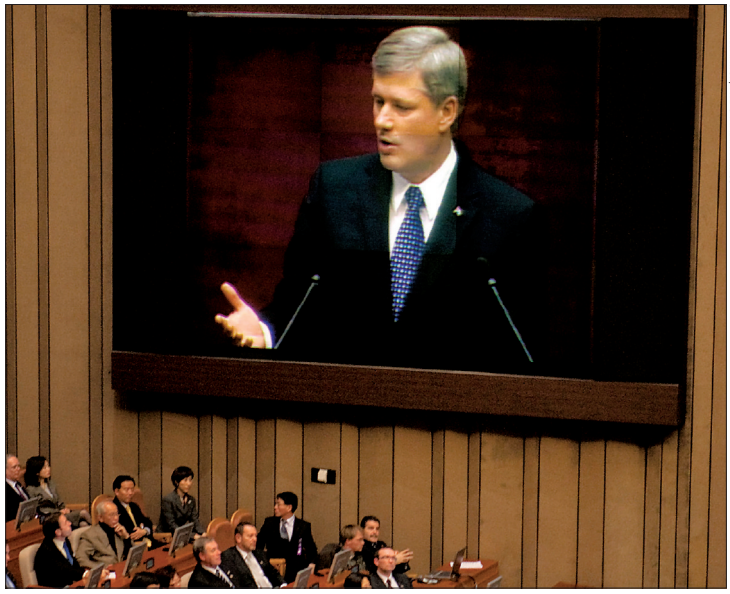
"So the great opportunity is obviously in the Asia-Pacific region."

Besides resources, Harper said Canada has other advantages, like deep cultural links that "should give us somewhat of a privileged position as we move forward into the future."

The prime minister commented after a two-hour meeting with Korean President Lee Myung-bak at the conclusion of what has been a sometimes rocky six-day tour of China and South Korea.

Harper and Lee emerged from their talks at the palatial Blue House in downtown Seoul proclaiming they would redouble efforts to reach a comprehensive trade deal that has eluded the two nations for years.

Both also pledged to work on lifting the six-year import ban on Canadian beef, although Lee noted it is a "sensitive issue" in Korea. Talks on both issues have met strong domestic lobbies — the auto sector in Canada, which complains it is being deprived access to Korean markets, and Korean farmers seeking protection from importers. THE CANADIAN PRESS



SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper addresses the national assembly in Seoul, South Korea, yesterday, in an effort to establish free trade ties with Canada.

m.metronews.ca

ScanLife

Barack Obama dispatches a top envoy to North Korea in an effort to ease tensions on the peninsula. Scan this barcode for the full article.

DriveTest to open four more centres

DRIVING DriveTest will open four more centres for limited services beginning today, bringing the number of centres open in Ontario to 12.

DriveTest had opened six centres using only managers, and the latest will be run by a mix of managers and striking employees.

The new centres opening today are in Kingston, St. Catharines, Bancroft and Ottawa.

They will provide written licence tests, road tests for commercial licences and out-of-province and out-of-country licence exchanges.

The strike, which began in August over job security, initially affected 93 full-time and part-time DriveTest sites.

The sites grant or renew licences to novice drivers and those older than 80 and does not affect people who renew their licence without a test.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

COLLAPSE A soldier who fatally shot his close friend in Afghanistan in 2007 is being released from a Nova Scotia prison pending his appeal before the Court Martial Appeal Court of Canada. Defence lawyer Lt.-Col. Troy Sweet said Matthew Wilcox will leave Springhill penitentiary and begin living with his parents.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tank cars burn after train wreck

SASKATCHEWAN Several tank cars continued to burn yesterday at a site near the Saskatchewan-Manitoba boundary where a CN freight train derailed.

A three-kilometre evacuation zone remained in effect near Spy Hill, Sask., where 36 rail cars left the tracks early Saturday. The evacuation included 10 homes, but no one was injured.

The burning tank cars carried propane, plastic pellets and benzene.

Short-term exposure to high levels of benzene can cause drowsiness, dizziness, unconsciousness and even death. But CN spokesman Kevin Franchuk said there was no threat to public safety.

"Much of the (benzene) has already burned off," said Franchuk. "The propane cars are still burning. Some of the plastic pellet cars are still smouldering." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime minister visits DMZ

KOREAS Inside the four-kilometre deep strip of mine-littered wasteland and barbed wire that separates the world's two most belligerent nations, the war is 69 years old and counting.

"The difference between us and them is when we stare at them, after a few minutes they look down ... We don't look down." U.S. guard in the DMZ

It was to the demilitarized zone that Stephen Harper came yesterday, no doubt anxious to avoid adding to the long list of provocations that have transpired over the years between the countries.

Flanked by officials and a considerable retinue of armed soldiers, the prime minister entered the squat, UN-blue barracks called Conference Row, which straddles the border between South and North Korea.

Inside, the prime minister took a fateful step — he walked into communist North Korea, the most dysfunctional and secretive country the world has likely ever known.

Outside the window, two North Korean soldiers were looking in, displaying the same sullen stares that every soldier displays in the demilitarized zone, which has existed since the uneasy truce was declared in 1953.

It's been this way since the 248-kilometre corridor, simply called the DMZ, was established in 1953, says U.S. Army Specialist Billy Campbell.

Campbell explained to reporters that the two sides never speak to each other. They don't even gesture at each other, he told one Canadian reporter, who was pointing distractedly toward the North side.

"Please do not point," he gently upbraided the reporter. "We do not point because they may interpret it as a provocative gesture."

Staring, on the other hand, is allowed.

"The difference between us and them is when we stare at them, after a few minutes they look down," a U.S. guard said. "We don't look down."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Do you suffer from sneezing, itchy and watery eyes brought on by cat allergies?

Cetero Research is seeking people suffering from allergies caused by cats to assess the effectiveness of an investigational study drug.

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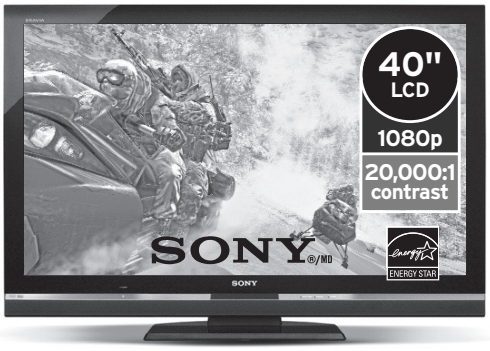

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Sentencing delayed in sexual assault case

Sentencing has been delayed in the case of an Alberta man who had fantasized about kidnapping someone before he abducted a 16-year-old girl and sexually assaulted her. A psychiatric report on Gerard Baumgarte was not available for a scheduled hearing in Red Deer, so his case was put over to Jan. 11. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Missing autistic boy found

7-year-old in critical condition in Halifax hospital

An autistic boy who survived two frigid nights lost in a densely wooded area of Cape Breton probably saved himself by seeking shelter under a thick carpet of underbrush and huddling next to his dog in the snow, searchers said yesterday.

Seven-year-old James Delorey was unconscious and suffering from severe hypothermia when he was found around 12:15 p.m.

His dog, a mixed-breed named Chance, had emerged from the marshy forest north of Sydney about two hours earlier, spurring searchers to redouble their efforts to find the little boy.

James was in critical condition when he was picked up by helicopter and taken to the IWK Health Centre in Halifax, the largest children's hospital in the Maritimes.

"He had severe hypothermia and was unresponsive," said Paul Maynard, a spokesman for Nova Scotia's Emergency Health Services.

THE CANADIAN PRESS/HANDOUT

James Delorey, 7, is shown in this Cape Breton Regional Police handout photo. The autistic boy was found by rescuers after being lost in the woods for two days.

"He did have very weak vital signs. That's why we transported him and are trying to warm him up and get those vital signs back to a normal range. Our fingers are crossed. Hopefully a miracle will happen and he will pull through."

Police said James had wandered away from his home in South Bar on Saturday afternoon while following his dog, triggering a massive search involving hundreds of people and three aircraft.

Within hours of his disappearance, a large snowstorm moved into the region, dumping up to 15 centimetres on some areas.

The boy, who can't speak, was not wearing a winter coat, hat or mittens.

The temperature held at 3 C for most of Saturday night but it dipped to 0 C on Sunday morning as the wind picked up, delivering gusts clocked at almost 70 kilometres per hour.

A rescue helicopter was grounded all day Sunday as the storm lashed the island.

By yesterday morning, the temperature had dropped to -3 C.

Desiree Vassallo, a spokeswoman for Cape Breton Regional Police, said the brown-haired boy was found 1.3 kilometres from a temporary police command post in South Bar.

Mike Murray of Halifax Regional Search and Rescue said a search team found the boy under thick brush by a brook near Kilkenny Lake.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Diabetes numbers expected to soar

HEALTH The number of Canadians diagnosed with diabetes and its cost to the economy are expected to soar over the next decade, says a report by the Canadian Diabetes Association, which is calling for urgent action to stem the tide of the disease.

In its report, An Economic Tsunami: The Cost of Diabetes in Canada, the group uses a modelling tool based on Canadian data to predict the future prevalence and price tag of diabetes at the end of the next decade.

"If left unchecked, the economic burden of diabetes in Canada could escalate to nearly $17 billion by 2020, an increase of more than $10 billion from 2000, and the number of Canadians diagnosed with diabetes will have nearly tripled," president and CEO Ellen Malcolmson said yesterday. "The results are a sobering reminder of the action required to reduce the burden of diabetes in Canada while improving the individual health for people living with the disease."

10% A new report predicts that almost 10 per cent of Canadians will be affected by diabetes in 2020, up from 7.3 per cent in 2010 and 4.2 per cent in 2000.

The report predicts diagnoses will reach an estimated 2.5 million next year, with another 1.2 million developing the disease over the following decade.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

POWER New Brunswick isn't prepared to give a written guarantee about access to power transmission through the province if the sale of NB Power to Hydro-Quebec is approved.

PAYDAY LOANS Saskatchewan is following other provinces by capping the rate of interest at 23 per cent that payday loan companies can charge people who borrow money.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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N.L. deficit not to be as high as originally projected
Newfoundland and Labrador is projecting a revised deficit of $443 million for the 2009-10 fiscal year, down from the $750-million deficit it forecast in its spring budget. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Renters allege Games eviction

Claim of property posting online

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

Pen poised to sign a rental agreement for one bedroom in a well-kept Vancouver home last July, grad student Sue Brown asked for one assurance before making the deal.

The lease was set to end Jan. 31, 2010, just before the start of the Olympic Games and smack dab in the middle of her school semester.

Knowing affordable housing would be scarce in February when the city will be flooded with visitors, she asked if she could extend the lease.

Told it wouldn't be a problem, the 28-year-old made out cheques for $580 per month and moved in.

Now Brown and her housemates say they're the victims of an Olympic eviction after they were handed eviction notices only to find online postings advertising the property as a "Winter Olympics House" that sleeps up to 20 people.

Cost: $11,900 a week or $34,000 for February and March. Calls to the landlord were not returned.

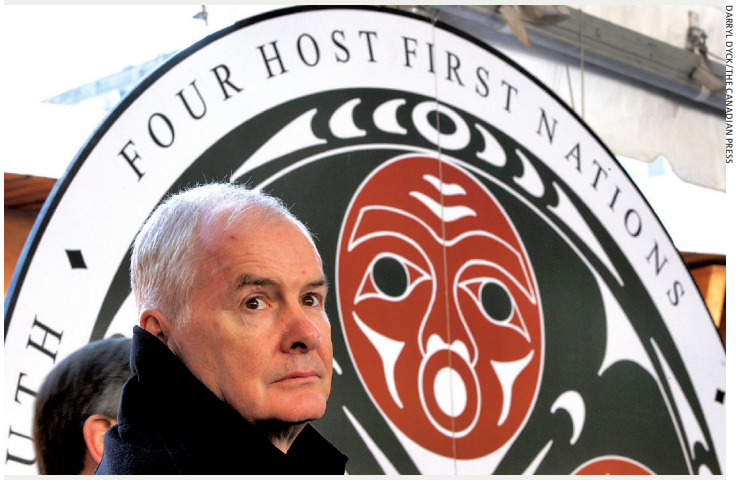
Brown and her housemates are the first group to go public with specific allegations of Olympic-related evictions.

"My sense is this is the tip of the iceberg, it's the beginning of December and this is when I imagine these situations will start to ramp up," said Laura Track, a spokeswoman for Pivot Legal Society, who joined members of the Olympic Resistance Network to publicize the situation yesterday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

City bylaw

- A housing planner said the city is currently investigating Sue Brown's allegations, which, if proven to be true and the house is rented, would break a bylaw passed in April.

Preview 2010 Aboriginal Pavilion



DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vancouver Organizing Committee CEO John Furlong looks on yesterday during a preview of the 2010 Aboriginal Pavilion in Vancouver. The pavilion, which is still under construction, will celebrate First Nations, Inuit and Metis culture and diversity during the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. **Follow the Olympic torch's journey with an interactive map at metronews.ca/sports**

Former cabinet minister found guilty of fraud

ST. JOHN'S Former N.L. cabinet minister Jim Walsh, 60, left a packed courtroom without a word yesterday after being convicted of fraud in the province's political spending scandal.

Provincial court Judge David Orr found the once-prominent Liberal guilty of fraud over $5,000 and breach of trust by a public officer. The charges stemmed from claims totalling $159,317 from Walsh's taxpayer-funded constituency allowance. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Athletes' greeters announced

OLYMPICS Man in Motion Rick Hansen will welcome athletes when they arrive in Vancouver for the 2010 Winter Games in February. Hansen is one of eight honorary mayors of the athletes villages named by Games organizers to greet the world's Olympic and Paralympic athletes.

Hansen will be joined by Olympic rowing silver medallist Tricia Smith as the voluntary village mayor for Vancouver, while former freestyle aerial skier Anna Fraser Sproule and Alan Kristmanson, a former member of the national men's basketball team, will handle duties in Whistler.

Dr. Douglas Clement, a UBC sports medicine professor, and his wife, Diane Clement, who competed for Canada as a sprinter, will act as voluntary mayors in Vancouver for the Paralympic Games, while Paralympians Marni Abbott-Peter and Patrick Anderson will greet athletes in Whistler. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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RCMP looking for person who set trap within reach of dog
Police in the Northwest Territories are looking for a person who set a trap within reach of a dog chained up on private property. RCMP in Fort Simpson say the chain had about six metres of leeway and the dog stepped on the trap. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lindhout to return this week

Freed journalist, family have left Nairobi: Spokeswoman

A family spokeswoman confirmed yesterday that an Alberta woman recently freed after 15 months of captivity in Somalia is returning to Canada this week.

Sarah Geddes said in an email that freelance journalist Amanda Lindhout and her family have left Nairobi.

Geddes said no other details are being released because the family has requested privacy.

Amanda Lindhout

Reports have suggested the Canadian government would send a plane to Kenya to bring her home, but Foreign Affairs officials citing privacy concerns have not commented.

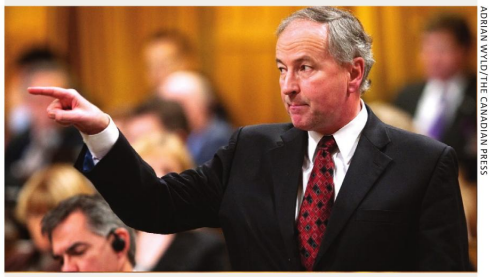
Lindhout and Australian photographer Nigel Brennan had been staying in Nairobi for medical treatment since they were freed Nov. 25.

The two were kidnapped by gunmen on a road in a lawless area south of Mogadishu in August 2008 while working on a story about displaced people.

The Canadian government has refused to comment on what, if any, role it played in the release. Lindhout's parents have said through Geddes they won't comment until their daughter has had some time to heal from the ordeal.

Reports have pegged the ransom paid for Lindhout and Brennan's release between $500,000 and $1 million. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ottawa Q&A


ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada Rob Nicholson gestures toward opposition MPs yesterday as he responds during question period in the House of Commons in Ottawa.

Don't let debt hinder support for aerospace: Industry chair

MONTREAL Financial support for Canada's aerospace industry can't be compromised by government efforts to trim their mounting budget deficits, the chairman of aerospace think-tank Aero Montreal says.

"It's not by accident that the industry working together with the government as a partner has created this unique aerospace industry in Canada that's the envy of the world," Marc Parent said yesterday.

The president and chief executive of simulator firm CAE Inc. said Montreal has grown to become among the leading aerospace clusters in the world through corporate investments in innovation and training that have been supported by the federal and Quebec governments.

Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and his Quebec counterpart have vowed to trim their deficits in the coming years.

But despite the tough decisions facing government, it's much easier to sustain a great industry than to have to create one, Parent told reporters at a two-day aerospace conference.

The Montreal region will host about 40,000 aerospace workers at 235 companies that have $12 billion in annual sales. About 80 per cent of the products are exported. THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

JOBS A Nova Scotia service provider is expanding in Halifax with plans to create up to 350 new jobs. Blue Ocean Contact Centers is a member of CCL Group, a strategic marketing and communications firm based in Halifax. The province is providing a five-year payroll rebate of up to $1.9 million. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chimp's owner won't be charged, source says

A Connecticut prosecutor does not plan to charge the owner of a chimpanzee that mauled and blinded a woman in February. A person with direct knowledge of the investigation tells The Associated Press that no charges are planned against chimp owner Sandra Herold. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Christmas Eve Mass moved up

The Vatican says Pope Benedict XVI will break with tradition this year and celebrate Christmas Eve Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at 10 p.m. instead of midnight. Papal spokesman the Rev. Federico Lombardi told The Associated Press yesterday the decision to change the schedule was made two months ago to "ease the (Pope's) fatigue at a time when there are many ceremonies and commitments" during Christmas holidays. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Timing meant to help Obama in Copenhagen

Go Green

WASHINGTON The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has concluded greenhouse gases are endangering Americans' health and must be regulated, signalling that the Obama administration is prepared to contain global warming without congressional action if necessary.

The finding is timed to boost the administration's arguments at an international climate conference — that opened yesterday — that the United States is aggressively taking actions to combat global warming, even though Congress has yet to act on climate legislation.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Last chance for deal?

The largest and most important UN climate change conference in history opened yesterday, with organizers warning diplomats from 192 nations that this could be the last best chance for a deal to protect the world from calamitous global warming.

The two-week conference, the climax of two years of contentious negotiations, convened in an upbeat mood after a series of promises by rich and emerging economies to curb their greenhouse gases. At stake is a deal that aims to wean the world away from fossil fuels and other pollutants to greener sources of energy, and to transfer hundreds of billions of dollars to poor countries every year to help them adapt to climate change. Scientists say without such an agreement, the Earth will face the consequences of ever-rising temperatures, leading to the extinction of plant and animal species, the flooding of coastal cities, more extreme weather, drought and the spread of diseases.

ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Environmentalists play dead yesterday during a demonstration demanding a 'real deal' for climate change at the UN conference in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Go Green

Conference president Connie Hedegaard said if governments miss their chance at the Copenhagen summit, a better opportunity may never come.

"This is our chance. If we miss it, it could take years before we got a new and better one. If we ever do," she said.

Negotiations have only recently showed signs of breakthroughs with new commitments from the U.S., China and India to control greenhouse gas emissions. But the commitments remained short of scientists' demands.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iraq recommends delaying election

BAGHDAD Iraq's electoral commission yesterday recommended a 45-day delay in parliamentary elections until Feb. 27, raising concerns that the postponed balloting could complicate the planned withdrawal of U.S. combat troops and bring a possible surge of violence.

American commanders have noted the chance of increased pre-election bloodshed aimed at destabilizing the pro-Western government. A series of attacks struck around the country as officials tried to hammer out the election timetable, including an explosion outside a Baghdad elementary school that killed 10 people, including six children.

There were concerns the delay could throw snags into withdrawal plans for the U.S. military.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Oshawa Centre
Pen Centre
Pickering Town Centre
Scarborough Town Centre
Sherway Gardens
Square One
Stone Road Mall
Tecumseh Mall
The Promenade
Toronto Eaton Centre
Upper Canada Mall
Vaughan Mills
Westmount Shopping Centre
White Oaks Mall
Woodbine Centre
Yorkdale Mall

Hurdle likely cleared for Serbia to join EU
Diplomats say European Union ministers have agreed to unblock a key trade agreement with Serbia that has stymied the Balkan nation's hopes for quick membership in the 27-nation bloc. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No U.S.-Italy tensions: Officials

CONVICTION The murder conviction of U.S. student Amanda Knox has not damaged U.S.-Italian relations, despite suggestions the verdict was tainted by anti-American sentiment, a top Italian diplomat said yesterday. After a tense weekend, the diplomat sought to quell speculation of a full-blown crisis, saying that no criticism had come from the U.S. secretary of state.

"Who criticized?" asked Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini. "Certainly not Hillary Clinton. Let's not create confusion."

Clinton, speaking Sunday, said she had not looked into the case but would meet with anybody who had concerns.

Knox was convicted over the weekend of sexually assaulting and murdering her British roommate, Meredith Kercher. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

m.metronews.ca
SCANLIFE
Diplomats ease fears that the Italian conviction of U.S. student Amanda Knox will lead to a crisis between the two nations. Scan this barcode for the full story.

Protests return to Iran

Tens of thousands of students, many shouting "Death to the Dictator!" and burning pictures of Iran's supreme leader, took to the streets on more than a dozen campuses yesterday in the biggest anti-government protests in months.

This photo, obtained by The Associated Press outside Iran, shows an anti-government female student wearing a scarf symbolic of the opposition during a protest at Tehran University yesterday.

Riot police and pro-government Basij militiamen on fleets of motorcycles flooded Tehran's main thoroughfares, beating men and women with clubs as crowds of demonstrators hurled bricks and stones. Some protesters set tires and garbage cans ablaze.

"Death to the oppressor, whether it's the shah or the leader!" the students chanted, according to witnesses — making a daring comparison between Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and the pro-U.S. shah, despised in Iran since his overthrow in the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The protests reflected how university students — the driving force of the 1979 Islamic Revolution — have revitalized the anti-government movement even as mainstream opposition politicians struggle to dent the power of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Iran's clerical leadership.

Movement dented

- A fierce government crackdown crushed gigantic protests by hundreds of thousands that erupted immediately after June's disputed presidential elections, which the opposition says Mahmoud Ahmadinejad won by fraud. The wave of arrests swept up not only protesters but also many pro-reform politicians and activists, damaging the movement.

Inside the walled campus of Tehran University, fistfights broke out between protesters and hard-line students loyal to the government. In one photo obtained by The Associated Press, a student wearing a green headband — the opposition's signature colour — had blood streaming down his face after a beating. Journalists working for foreign media organizations have been banned from covering opposition protests, including yesterday's demonstrations. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dozens killed as two bombs rock Pakistan

LAHORE Bombings in two Pakistan cities killed 46 people as militants struck back in the wake of an army offensive against a Taliban stronghold near the Afghan border.

Two synchronized bombs yesterday ripped through a market popular with women in the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore, igniting a massive fire that killed 36 people, authorities said.

Hours earlier a suicide bomber killed 10 people outside a courthouse in the northwestern city of Peshawar.

About 100 people were wounded in the attacks in Lahore, which were timed to take place when the Moon Market was at its busiest. Authorities initially said both bombs at the market were believed to be remote-controlled, but they later said a suicide bomber was suspected to have carried out at least one of them.

The blasts came within 30 seconds of each other, leaving dozens of cars and shops ablaze late into the night.

400 Approximate number of people killed by violence in Pakistan since October.

Many victims were women and children, including a dead two-year-old, a police officer said.

Most of the militant attacks in recent weeks have been directed at security forces, though several have targeted crowded public spaces like markets, apparently to create public anger and increase pressure on the government to call a halt to the offensive.

More than 400 people have been killed since the beginning of October, including 105 in a Peshawar market frequented by women. That attack occurred while U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was visiting Pakistan.

The Taliban generally claim responsibility for those attacks killing security officers, but they do not acknowledge carrying out the attacks targeting civilians. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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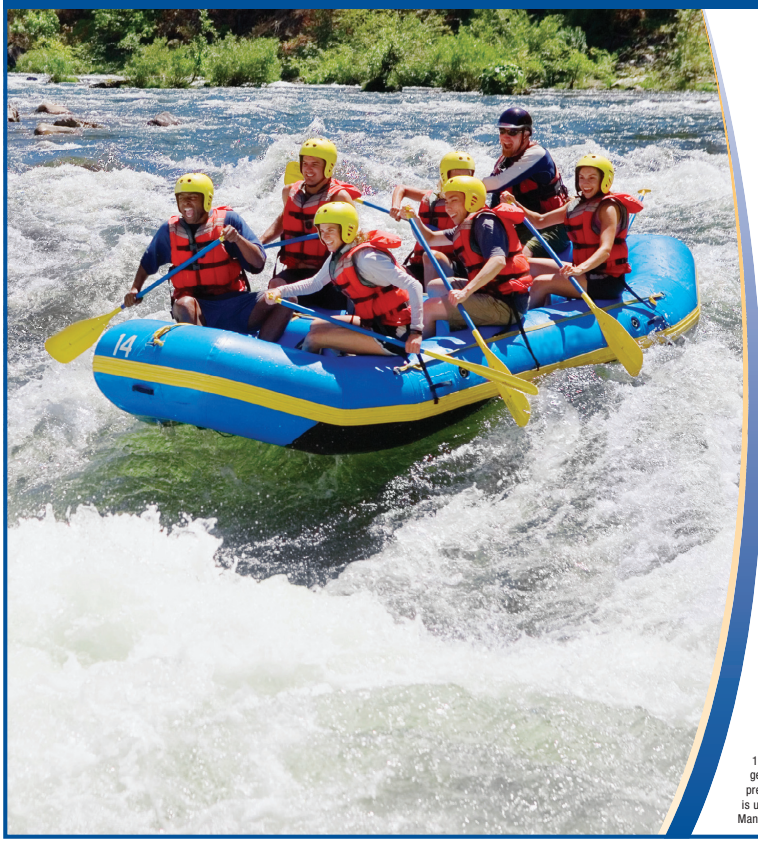

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FBI looking into man missing from cruise ship

A cruise line says the FBI is investigating the disappearance of an Italian chef who may have gone overboard from an American cruise ship. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Korea grilled on human rights

State makes rare public appearance at UN

North Korea made a rare appearance before a UN human rights organization yesterday, facing accusations of widespread abuses such as forced labour, public executions and torture.

The communist state, which also was accused of allowing its population to go hungry and forcing women prison inmates to have abortions, defended itself before the Human Rights Council during a three-hour session in surprisingly candid language. At one point, it said public executions were carried out at request of victims' families.

But North Korean Ambassador Ri Tcheul also told delegations the hearing was "unpleasant."

Limited arable land and natural disasters have prevented the government from being able to feed the entire population, Ri said. But he said the situation has improved in recent years.

"The issue of serious malnutrition is a thing of the past," he told the 47-nation council. "We will in the near future meet the domestic need for food on our own."

Diplomats weren't convinced.

Canada's representative, John Von Kaufmann, was among those who urged the mostly closed communist country to allow aid workers to bring food to the chronically undernourished population.

The UN estimates that 8.7 million people need food in North Korea. The country has relied on foreign assistance to feed much of its population since the mid-1990s when its economy was hit by natural disasters and the loss of the regime's Soviet benefactor. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. talks

- After a year of tensions, U.S. President Barack Obama is sending a veteran diplomat to North Korea today for the highest-profile talks between Pyongyang and Washington since he took office pledging to reach out to America's adversaries.

Russia-India **Big deal in the works**

ALEXANDER NEMENOV/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Indian Prime Minister Manmoham Singh enter a hall during their meeting at the Kremlin in Moscow yesterday. Singh has begun talks with Medvedev in Moscow to clinch multi-billion dollar defense and energy deals.

Call for new constitution in China not going away

CHARTER 08 Police took Liu Xiaobo away one year ago, a day before the publication of a document he co-authored that called for more civil rights in China and an end to the Communist Party's political dominance. The former professor has been held without charge ever since and allowed just two visits from his wife.

Other Chinese bold enough to put their names to "Charter 08" — an unusually direct call for a new constitution guaranteeing human rights, the open election of public officials, and freedom of religion and expression — have been interrogated or tailed by police as part of a government drive to quash the effort.

A news blackout and Internet censorship have left most Chinese unaware that it exists.

Beijing lawyer Mo Shaoping said the document marks a significant step for China and compared it to the document it was modeled on — a charter written by Vaclav Havel and others in 1977. That declaration helped pave the way for the 1989 Velvet Revolution that swept away the communist regime in what was then Czechoslovakia.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Killer set to die in new procedure

EXECUTION A condemned killer scheduled to become the first person in the U.S. put to death with a single drug — in an execution that could take longer than previous procedures — arrived yesterday at the Ohio death house.

Kenneth Biros, 51, was sentenced to die for killing and dismembering a woman he met in a bar in 1991.

It would be the first injection under Ohio's switch from using three drugs to a new one-drug execution method. A backup method allows executioners to inject drugs directly into muscles.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

British soldier death toll reaches 100 in Afghanistan
A British soldier was killed in southern Afghanistan, the Defence Ministry said yesterday, bringing to 100 the British death toll in the troubled central Asian country this year. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pulitzer board elects Politico co-founder

MEMBER The Pulitzer Prize Board has elected its first member representing a primarily online news organization.

Columbia University announced yesterday that Jim Vande-Hei will join the board. He's the executive editor and co-founder of Politico.

The announcement comes days after the board adjusted its rules to allow entries from websites that are not primarily dedicated to original news reporting.

The board has been shifting its approach as more news is published and read online.

Columbia University says Politico "blends the old media values of fairness and accuracy with the speed and immediacy of new technologies."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Resumé

- Jim Vande-Hei was a political reporter for The Wall Street Journal and The Washington Post before starting Politico.

KEVIN FRAYER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Afghans wait to receive medication from U.S. Navy medical personnel yesterday at a free clinic in Khan Neshin in the volatile province of Helmand, southern Afghanistan. The clinic provides medication and medical treatment for the local population.

Karzai's list demanded

Refusing to be a rubber stamp, Afghan lawmakers yesterday demanded a full, not partial, list of President Hamid Karzai's new cabinet — the first test of the embattled leader's commitment to clean up graft and bribery in his government.

Karzai, who won a second term after an election marred by ballot-stuffing, is under intense international pressure to assemble a cabinet of reformists — a tall order in a country where Afghans pay bribes for everything from driver's licences to police protection and the mayor of the capital of Kabul was sentenced to jail yesterday on corruption charges.

Members of parliament must approve Karzai's picks for his team, but in the past they have overlooked ministers with unsuitable qualifications and in some cases, ministers have served without being approved. This time, lawmakers appear to be playing a larger role in the process of seating a new 25-member cabinet in hopes of ensuring that presidential cronies don't slip through.

Despite the demand for a full list, an official close to Karzai, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the president would only release the names of six nominees today.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Corruption

- An Afghan court sentenced the mayor of Kabul, Mir Abdul Ahad Sahebi, to four years in prison for corruption in connection with contracts on city projects.

Turkish soldiers killed in attack on eve of court case

TURKEY Assailants raked a military vehicle with automatic weapon fire yesterday, killing at least seven Turkish soldiers in the first attack on troops in a central region of Turkey in nearly a decade, authorities said.

Authorities could not identify the attackers, but suspicion fell on Kurdish and leftist militants because the ambush followed violent street protests by Kurdish rebel supporters across the country in recent weeks.

The attack also came on the eve of a critical court case in which Turkey's constitutional court will start deliberating whether to shut down the country's pro-Kurdish political party, which is often accused of being a front for the Kurdish rebel group.

The vehicle came under fire in a rugged mountainous area near a military outpost near the town of Resadiye in the Tokat province, said the town's mayor Rafet Erdem.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Violent protests

- Kurdish youths have been staging violent street protests across Turkey to denounce new prison conditions for Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan.

News in brief

HEALING Guinea's military strongman, hospitalized in Morocco with a gunshot wound, is alert and in possession of his mental faculties, the country's foreign minister said yesterday as he tried to tamp down speculation that Capt. Moussa (Dadis) Camara is badly hurt. Alexandre Cece Loua told The Associated Press he has spoken with Camara in the hospital and called his condition "encouraging." Few details have emerged about the nature of Camara's wounds since he was shot in an assassination attempt in Guinea Thursday.

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50 more patients exposed to high radiation levels
U.S. federal health regulators have identified 50 more patients exposed to dangerous radiation levels from brain scans. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Robbers use soccer games to hide theft

$6M stolen from armoured car company

Thieves who spent months tunnelling from a rented house to an armoured car company made off with $6 million over the weekend as season-ending soccer matches virtually paralyzed the nation, Brazilian authorities said yesterday.

The heist was discovered Sunday evening — after the games ended. Officers followed the tunnel from the company's safe some 100 metres underground to a house, Sao Paulo police said in a statement.

Police said the home, abandoned when they arrived, had been occupied for about four months. Its former occupants are considered suspects, but there were no immediate arrests.

Officials with the armoured car company — Transnacional Transporte de Valores e Seguranca Patrimonial Ltda — told officers 10 million reals ($6.1 million) were missing, according to the statement.

Globo TV's G1 website reported that electricity was cut off to the company's office and some security cameras were not on when the theft happened, but authorities did not immediately confirm that.

The heist occurred on the last weekend of the soccer season, when the league championship and relegation matches had people nationwide glued to their televisions.

A security guard at the building heard a loud noise at about 5 p.m. Sunday, but figured it was from fireworks that sports fans had been setting off throughout the afternoon, O Estado de S. Paulo reported.

The newspaper said thieves left behind sacks of coins in the tunnel, and police found bags of dirt in the house — presumably from the excavation.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Anniversary of death prompts riots

GREECE Masked youths smashed store windows and hurled rocks and firebombs at riot police who responded with tear gas yesterday in a second day of violence during commemorations of last year's fatal police shooting of a teenager.

The death last year of 15-year-old Alexis Grigoropoulos led to some of the worst rioting Greece had ever seen, with gangs of youths smashing, looting and burning stores in cities across the country for two weeks, protesting heavy-handed police tactics.

Yesterday's clashes broke out during a demonstration by about 3,000 people, mostly high school students, through the centre of Athens. Several dozen youths at the tail end of the march attacked riot police with rocks, firebombs and firecrackers, smashing some of the bus stops, telephone booths and storefronts not damaged in Sunday's demonstration.

Protesters injured a passerby who attempted to intervene, beating the middle-aged man unconscious. Police detained at least three youths.

Some demonstrators tried to prevent clashes, shouting at the groups of youths instigating the violence, but to little avail.

Police said yesterday that 784 people had been detained, including 136 people who were arrested.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KOSTAS TSIRONIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A riot policeman arrests a protester yesterday during clashes in Athens. Masked youths smashed store windows and hurled rocks and firebombs at riot police who responded with tear gas in a second day of violence during commemorations of last year's fatal police shooting of a teenager.

Terrorism charges upgraded

DENMARK A Chicago man accused of planning an armed attack on a Danish newspaper was charged yesterday with conducting surveillance on potential targets in the Indian city of Mumbai before terrorist attacks there in 2008 that killed 166 people.

David Coleman Headley was charged with 12 counts, including six counts of conspiracy to bomb public places in India, to murder and maim individuals in India and Denmark and other offences.

Headley, 48, an American citizen formerly named Daood Gilani, Tahawwur Rana, 48, a Canadian national, was charged in October with plotting to attack the Jyllands Posten newspaper in Denmark. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

KABUL U.S. President Barack Obama says the United States and Turkey are committed to defeating terrorism wherever it occurs. Obama thanked Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Turkish people for their commitments in Afghanistan. Turkey took over the rotating command of the NATO peacekeeping operation in Kabul last month and doubled its number of troops to around 1,750. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Comment

Tories among the last to the table

NationalReport
Lawrence Martin

metronews.ca/nationalreport

You don't have to look too closely to notice a pattern in our governing Conservatives. They're late learners.

On two of the biggest trendlines of our time — global warming and the rise of China — they are among the last to the table.

In South Korea yesterday, Prime Minister Stephen Harper stated what has been obvious for many years — that Canada must increasingly look to the Asia-Pacific region for opportunities because it is the world's big growth area. He had come from China where he was scolded by the leadership for taking almost four years to visit.

Soon he will be off to Copenhagen for the UN climate change summit. A week ago, he was at a Commonwealth meeting in Trinidad, where Ottawa's foot-dragging on that issue was singled out by the UN Secretary General, as well as other leaders.

In Denmark he may surprise us and signal, as he did on trade with China, a new seriousness about the global warming issue. But even if he does, opposition critics have a right to wonder what took so long.

One explanation is Harper was a neophyte in foreign affairs when he became prime minister. His experience had been insular. He faced a steep learning curve. Another was his strong ties to his conservative roots. Conservatives believed Canada's economic future lay in an ever-closer economic partnership with the United States. As for global warming, they were longtime non-believers, as exemplified by the PM once labelling the Kyoto accord a socialist scheme.

For him and his party to get beyond the old-time religion has been a tough challenge. It was evident, too, in the Tories' handling of the economy. We recall little more than a year ago when the PM and his finance minister were among the last of the Western leaders to recognize the oncoming recession. They were holding to the view that there would be balanced budgets for years to come, that no great spurt of stimulus funding was necessary. They were then smart enough to abruptly switch course and bring in Keynesian-styled economic strategies that ran against party dogma.

Another breaking-with-dogma test will be on the subject of taxation. To date, the government is holding to the line that, despite a deficit bordering on $60 billion, no new taxes need be introduced to address it and avoid what many economists foresee as a structural deficit. Conservatives understandably loathe the idea of new taxes but, as on other matters, old beliefs have to be adjusted to fit new circumstance.

Hopefully, the gang that shoots late has learned by now that the adjustments shouldn't take years to come.

Lawrence Martin is a journalist and author of 10 books who writes about national affairs from Ottawa.

Views

Structural leeway enables white-collar crime

InBusiness
Charles Davies

metronews.ca/inbusiness

If PricewaterhouseCoopers' annual survey is an accurate indicator, economic or "white-collar" crime in Canada is growing at a disturbing rate, and far faster than in other developed countries.

The accounting giant finds, that in 2009, 56 per cent of Canadian companies surveyed reported instances of fraud, a 10 per cent increase since 2003. Globally, only 30 per cent of companies reported frauds this year, compared to 37 per cent in 2003.

The survey focuses on the various types of fraud that are either perpetrated on companies by their own employees (59 per cent of the cases in 2009) or by outsiders including customers and suppliers (38 per cent of cases). The survey also makes the sobering point that economic downturns increase "both the motivation and opportunity to commit fraud," just when cost-conscious companies are cutting back on resources used to assess risks and provide internal controls.

Still, this understates the problem of economic crime in Canada. What the survey doesn't delve into, however, is our longstanding structural predisposition toward fraudulent behaviour. Generally accepted Canadian accounting principles have long drawn criticism for the generous leeway they allow public companies to creatively shape financial results. This situation will only worsen when Canada adopts the new global accounting benchmark — International Financial Reporting Standards — in 2011. Even more than the current system, IFRS will allow companies leeway to make judgment calls when presenting results.

It hardly helps that Canada stumbles along with a network of 13 provincial and territorial securities commissions, most of which are ineffective at identifying or pursuing fraud.

To be fair, some progress is in the offing. Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty has been resolute in campaigning for a national securities commission against the parochial objections of Alberta and Quebec in particular. And in late October, the federal government introduced legislation to amend the criminal code to provide tougher sentences and other strictures against convicted fraudsters. The bill is currently at the committee stage. Canada is taking baby steps when it should be making great strides, but some progress is better than none at all.

Charles Davies is a veteran business writer who has worked for Canadian and international news organizations.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

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$25.8M contract awarded to expand highway

Aecon Group Inc. announced yesterday it was awarded a $25.8-million contract by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation to expand Highway 7 near Ottawa to four lanes from two lanes just west of Highway 15 to the Highway 417 interchange. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Toronto gold investment firm bids to take over U.S.-based rival

TAKEOVER Shares of International Royalty Corp. soared yesterday after Franco-Nevada Corp., a Toronto company that owns stakes in many gold mines, made an unsolicited all-cash offer to acquire the Denver-based gold company for about $639 million.

International Royalty shares rose $2.34 to $7.05, a gain of 49.7 per cent, in trading of 11.5 million shares, making it the most active trader on the TSX.

Late Sunday, the Toronto company said it would pay $6.75 for each of IRC's 94.7 million shares to purchase its smaller rival.

Franco-Nevada said the offer represents a 43 per cent premium to the $4.71 closing price of IRC shares Friday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Martha Teams with Home Depot

ELISE AMENDOLA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

The Home Depot Inc. will start selling Martha Stewart-branded paint and cleaning products in the U.S. next year in addition to the home decor and closet organization lines announced in September, the home improvement retailer said yesterday.

Business in brief

CELLPHONES Research In Motion announced yesterday a distribution deal with Hong Kong-based Digital China to try to sell more BlackBerrys in China, where it faces competition from domestic players, international rivals like Nokia and Apple's iPhone. RIM shares closed up $1.34 or about two per cent at $63.40 on the TSX. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Builders gain confidence

Developers who had shelved projects when the market for homes slowed in the Toronto area earlier this year have regained confidence enough to start building again.

Building permits in the Toronto area were up by a robust 42 per cent in October, according to a report by Statistics Canada. Contractors took out $1.042 billion worth of permits compared to $733 million in September, according to the federal agency.

Nationally, building permits were up by 18 per cent to $6.1 billion. Ontario and Quebec accounted for much of the growth at the national level.

Year to date, however, building permits are still down by 23 per cent.

But not everyone is convinced the current run-up will have lasting legs. A recent report by TD Bank says the average Canadian home is overvalued by 12 per cent. Home prices are expected to continue to increase by the first quarter of 2010, by which time prices will be 13 to 15 per cent overvalued, says the bank. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

m.metronews.ca
ScanLife

Fed chairman Ben Bernanke cautions that it's too early to judge the strength of the economic rebound. Scan this barcode for the full story.

GM's electric car going to Michigan plant
General Motors Co. says it will invest $336 million in a Michigan plant that will build Volt, its new rechargeable electric car. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Big Bird & Co. now belong to Hasbro

Elmo is getting a new home — or his toys are, at least.

Toy maker Hasbro Inc. said yesterday it will make and market toys and games based on well-known Sesame Street characters, such as Elmo, Big Bird and Cookie Monster.

The deal takes the licence away from Hasbro rival Mattel Inc., which makes Sesame Street toys under its Fisher-Price brand under a deal lasting until 2010. Hasbro will start making the products in 2011.

The agreement covers all Sesame Street toys, but Julie Duffy, a representative for Hasbro, said it's "too early to tell" which toys it will continue making, including the popular Tickle Me Elmo toy.

"We now have the rights to Elmo, so anything is possible," she said.

MARK LENNIHAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this 2008 file photo, Big Bird is seen during the taping of an episode of Sesame Street in New York.

Financial terms of the deal between Hasbro and Sesame Workshop were not disclosed.

The products designed to entertain and educate young children will be in stores starting in 2011.

Hasbro, the second largest toy maker in the U.S., is permitted to make the merchandise for 10 years.

"Sesame Workshop has an amazing portfolio of characters that children have enjoyed in a variety of forms for decades, and Sesame Street is a brand that parents trust," said Brian Goldner, Hasbro's president and CEO.

Sesame Workshop is a non-profit educational organization that produces local Sesame Street programs seen in more than 140 countries. Shares of Hasbro rose 89 cents, or 2.9 per cent, to $31.07 in morning trading. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Business in brief

INDUSTRY Electric carmaker Zenn Motor Company Inc. announced yesterday it plans to cease production at its Quebec plant of its low-speed vehicles by the end of April 2010. The Toronto-based company said its Zenn LSV 2010 model will be the final version of the electric car produced as it turns its attention to the ZENNergy drive solutions product. The St-Jerome plant, which employs 11 people, will close in April. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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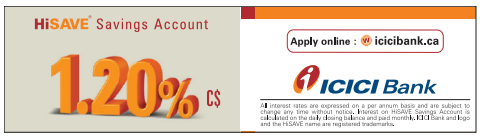


Gold could lose its shine

Investing

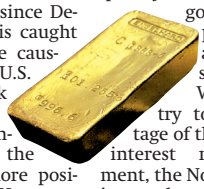
Allan Small

metronews.ca/investing

The U.S. unemployment rate ticked down for the first time in many months — 11,000 jobs were lost, the best reading since December 2007. This caught many by surprise causing a spike in the U.S. dollar and a quick selloff of gold.

The market continues to rise on the back of these more positive numbers. However, perhaps some of the more "crowded trades" of this past year such as the shorting of the U.S. dollar and the buying of gold may be slowing down.

Precious metals, in particular gold, have been a great asset class to be invested in over the last few years. My main message is to be careful. If the U.S. dollar begins to strengthen there could be a mass exodus from the yellow metal. Just as investors have been buying gold quite rapidly over the last year, many could begin to sell just as quickly and the price for gold and other precious metals could fall sharply.



We still need to try to take advantage of the current low interest rate environment, the No. 1 factor driving markets higher. Things will be different when rates begin to rise.

Allan Small can be reached at asmall@dundeesecurities.com The views expressed are not necessarily those of Dundee Securities

6 steps to help you cope with job loss

AlisonOnMoney

by Alison Griffiths

metronews.ca/alisononmoney

The experts' proclamations about the end of the recession doesn't ease the pain of job loss, especially at this time of year. Here are six steps to help you through it.

1 Face up to the facts. The very worst thing you can do is retreat into a shell of denial. Some people even go to the extent of pretending they haven't lost their jobs. There's no shame in it, so spend your emotional energy on finding another one.

2 Keep to a routine. Jobs provide structure. Without it days become aimless and despondency can set in. Get up at your normal time and devote as much time looking for a new job as you would working.

3 Do a financial audit. When you or your spouse is out of work immediately inventory your debts and assets, income and expenditures to determine how much shortfall you might face. Then be proactive and adjust your spending accordingly.

4 Go for quick cash. If you are eligible for employment insurance apply for it immediately — you'd be surprised how many people delay because of embarrassment. If you're not eligible, look for any kind of work and any hours in order to maintain cash flow. Working will keep you energized and help you feel good about yourself.

5 Re-adjust your holiday plans. If you have already purchased gifts for other adults, return them and focus on your children if you have any. Kids get stressed when parents lose jobs so try to keep things normal. But be upfront with them to keep their expectations in check.

6 Ask for help. If you are the holiday dinner host or like to entertain, tell your friends and family about your situation. Trust them to pitch in. This is the season of giving, after all.

> Losing a job is akin to dying though not nearly so final. There's no real way to prepare for the pink slip but there are a few rules about what to do afterwards.

Alison Griffiths is a financial journalist, author and host of Maxed Out on the W Network. Write to her at alison@alisongriffiths.ca.

MoneyMatters

Henry Choo Chong

metronews.ca/moneymatters

Enjoy holidays on tight budget

Q **Finances have been difficult and going into the holiday season does not bring me a lot of joy. Can you offer some financial advice?**
— Maurice, Newmarket

A Here are a few tips to reduce stress and enjoy the season:

- Give a thoughtful, creative but inexpensive gift.
- Create a holiday budget and stick to it.
- Pay cash for all gifts — no credit cards please.
- Eat out less.
- Comparison shop.
- Buy gifts for kids only.
- Shop early. Last-minute shoppers tend to spend more.

Henry Choo Chong, CGA, can be reached at choochonghcga@yahoo.ca and 416-485-5225.

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Heisman finalists named
Tim Tebow and Colt McCoy are headed back to the Heisman Trophy presentation as finalists, along with running backs Mark Ingram and Toby Gerhart and defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh. The five finalists were announced yesterday. The Heisman Trophy will be awarded Saturday in Manhattan. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports

Herzog headed to Hall

Manager Whitey Herzog, left, and umpire Doug Harvey are the newest members of baseball's Hall of Fame. The Veterans Committee announced the voting results yesterday. Herzog managed in the majors from 1973-90, and won the 1982 World Series and three NL pennants with the St. Louis Cardinals. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Woods had $235 in SUV: police report

A police officer who responded to Tiger Woods' SUV accident outside his Florida home found two iron golf clubs on the ground and $235 US in the vehicle.

The Windermere officer said in a report released yesterday that Woods was at first unresponsive, lying on the road covered in a blanket and resting his head on a pillow. The officer, whose name was redacted from the report, said the world's No. 1 golfer tried to stand up before the officer told him to lie down for his safety. The officer used the pillow to immobilize the golfer's spine.

Tiger Woods

Woods was bleeding from cut lips but was breathing normally. His wife, Elin, was kneeling over him.

The sport utility vehicle's engine was still running, the front passenger door was jammed and both rear door windows were broken out. The two golf clubs were next to a golf cart, which also was in the road, the report said.

Woods hit a hydrant and a tree around 2:25 a.m. the Friday after U.S. Thanksgiving. His wife told police she used a golf club to smash the back windows of the SUV to help him out.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Leafs thump Thrashers

NHL

Thrashers 2 Maple Leafs 5

AT

The Toronto Maple Leafs picked an unlikely time to have a breakout game at Air Canada Centre.

Vesa Toskala earned a victory in his first start since Nov. 23 and Alexei Ponikarovsky scored goals 28 seconds apart yesterday as Toronto beat the Atlanta Thrashers 5-2.

It was the first time Toronto won a weekday game at home this season and it came against one of the NHL's best road teams. The Thrashers entered with an away record of 9-2-1.

Lee Stempniak, Matt Stajan and Mikhail Grabovski also had goals for the Maple Leafs (8-13-7), who bounced back from a 7-2 loss in Boston Saturday.

Bryan Little and Marty Reasoner replied for Atlanta (15-8-3).

CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Maple Leaf Tomas Kaberle checks Atlanta Thrasher Maxim Afinogenov last night at the Air Canada Centre. The Leafs won 5-2.

A solid night for the Maple Leafs spoiled the return of two former players. Nik Antropov and Pavel Kubina were back at the ACC for the first time since leaving the team and had a forgettable evening — they were a combined minus-5.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Young skip generating buzz at curling trials

Move over Kevin Martin and Randy Ferbey. There's a new fan favourite emerging at the Canadian Olympic curling trials.

Jason Gunnlaugson is a 25-year-old, baby-faced skip with long shaggy hair who lists his occupation as an online poker player. And while he's considered an underdog to win a berth in the Vancouver Olympics, he is generating the most buzz this week in Edmonton.

Gunnlaugson, who lives in Winnipeg but curls out of the Beausejour Curling Club, snagged a spot in the trials at the pre-trials tournament in Prince George, B.C., last month.

"Being the curling nerd I am we've been picking the brains of these guys for years."
Jason Gunnlaugson

He's only been skipping for a year but his boyish looks and confident swagger have made him a favourite with the fans at Rexall Place.

"As a huge curling fan myself I'm just so happy I get to watch and the front row seats are going to be amazing," he said yesterday.

"It will be easy to keep focused on the game but in between ends you're going to be looking over and saying holy crap these guys are good."

Gunnlaugson says he has been learning from the veteran Canadian skips for years.

"Being the curling nerd I am we've been picking the brains of these guys for years, I probably thought, 'Oh, just some kids and now they're going to have to play us,'" he added. "We're just some kids expected by some to go 0-7 or 1-6. We just get to go surprise somebody."

Winnipeg's Jeff Stoughton has known Gunnlaugson since he was a child. His uncle, Garry Van Den Berghe, was a Stoughton teammate for 15 years.

"He is so passionate about the game and I think it's great for the game and it's going to be a lot of fun for him this week," Stoughton said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sports in brief

CURLING Defending Canadian women's champion Jennifer Jones is on the brink after losing her second consecutive game at the Canadian Olympic curling trials in Edmonton. Jones gave up four points in the fifth end yesterday morning and was dumped 9-3 by Krista McCarville.

CURLING Glenn Howard and Kevin Koe remained undefeated at the Canadian Olympic curling trials yesterday while Kevin Martin and Randy Ferbey stumbled, but the real battle appears to be the ice itself. Throughout the first two draws, Canada's top curlers have been surprisingly sloppy. Light on draws, heavy on draws, a lack of curl — the result has been plenty of steals.

BASEBALL Brian Bruney was dealt yesterday to the Washington Nationals from the New York Yankees for a player to be named in the first trade of the winter meetings. The 27-year-old right-hander was 5-0 with a 3.92 ERA in 44 regular-season appearances but pitched just once for the Yankees from mid-April until mid-June because of a strained right elbow.

FOOTBALL Quarterback Jimmy Clausen and his favourite receiver, Golden Tate, will bypass their senior seasons at Notre Dame and enter the NFL draft. The school announced the players' decisions yesterday before a news conference was held on campus.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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HEYDAY FILMS

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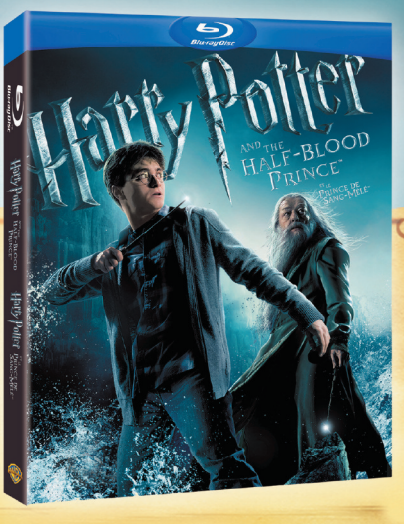

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McCarty retires

Darren McCarty, a veteran of 15 NHL seasons who won four Stanley Cups with the Detroit Red Wings, officially announced his retirement yesterday. The 37-year-old McCarty spent 13 seasons with the Red Wings. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Back-to-back wins give Raptors new attitude

Less than a week after holding a closed-door meeting, the Toronto Raptors return home a changed team — both on and off the court.

The Raptors were a relaxed bunch at yesterday's practice as they prepare for today's game against the lowly Minnesota Timberwolves (The Score, 7 p.m. ET). It's a short return home for the Raptors — they face the Bucks in Milwaukee tomorrow — but the meeting with Minnesota should provide a great chance to build on the momentum generated from a pair of unlikely road victories.

Tensions were high after Toronto dropped a 146-115 decision to the Atlanta Hawks last Wednesday, a loss that had Raptors superstar Chris Bosh labelling the team's defensive effort a "total embarrassment" and questioning his teammates' pride. Head coach Jay Triano huddled with his players after the game to give them a chance to air any grievances they might have.

The Raptors followed with a thrilling 109-107 overtime win in Washington, then routed Chicago 110-78 for just their third winning streak of the season.

Triano said the meeting served its purpose.

"I think it was just communication between some guys that don't really get to say a lot," said Triano.

"It was a chance for them to say what they felt and what they thought, and because of that, everybody understands each other.

"It's definitely not done. We've got to keep getting better and keep growing close if we're going to be successful."

With nine new players on the Raptors' opening-day roster, a feeling-out process was expected. Yet, while Toronto has been cohesive on the offensive end, ranking fourth in the league in points per game (105.7), the defence has been abysmal. The Raptors rank second-last in points allowed (109.3), and the 146 they surrendered to the Hawks was the second-most they had given up in franchise history.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Early exit for Bosh

- Chris Bosh left practice early yesterday, saying he wasn't feeling well. The Raptors expect him to be fine for today's game against Minnesota.

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Toronto 5 Atlanta 2
New Jersey 3 Buffalo 0
Philadelphia at Montreal
Carolina at Pittsburgh
Washington at Tampa Bay
Edmonton at Florida
Colorado at St. Louis
Minnesota at Phoenix
Calgary at Los Angeles

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Denver 93 Philadelphia 83
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Jays listening to offers

No players off the table as Anthopoulos meets with fellow GMs

On the first day of his first winter meetings as the man in charge, Blue Jays general manager Alex Anthopoulos is playing his cards close to the vest as he casts his wide net into the trade waters.

"We've pretty much made every player available if it's in the right deal for us."
Alex Anthopoulos

As of mid-afternoon yesterday, the 32-year-old had spoken with four other teams and had meetings scheduled with three more. By the end of the week, he expects to have spoken with all 29 opposing GMs regarding trades and will likely have mentioned all of his players.

"To me it's just continuing the process that we have in place trying to improve the club," Anthopoulos said. "The primary goal here is trying to get some things done on the trade front. I expect to talk to some (player) agents as well, but more so trades. It's pretty much what I expected. There's a lot of work to be done. I'll continue to line up and meet with teams."

His strategy since he re-emerged from his office with a game plan at the end of the World Series has been to announce to other teams that every player on his roster is available in a trade. It's obviously not going to happen with a guy like Aaron Hill, but he felt that was the best way to get into the heads of his fellow GMs and to see what they have to offer.

"There's a lot of different alternatives and routes," the Montreal native said. "We've pretty much made every player available if it's in the right deal for us. I wanted now to narrow the scope a little bit. It was important for me to sort of canvas all the GMs of the teams and by making everybody available to get a good sense of who was available on the opposing team."

Anthopoulos refuses to name specific teams or specific players he has spoken to. He won't clarify the conditions of time (before spring training) and place (close to his Florida home) that Roy Halladay is rumoured to have demanded.

One position on the diamond that Anthopoulos has been discussing and that seems uppermost in his mind is catcher.

Both the Yankees with Jesus Montero and the Angels with Jeff Mathis have catchers available in any Halladay deal. But even then the young GM has his hesitations.

"There's certainly some names that are out there in trade and that's part of sitting with the group and talking about it," he said.

"Long term it's not a major priority for us, because we do feel like J.P. Arencibia is a guy that we can count on."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

NBA Going for the layup

NICK LAHAM/GETTY IMAGES

Danilo Gallinari of the New York Knicks drives the lane against Joel Pryzbilla of the Portland Trail Blazers last night at Madison Square Garden in New York.

Coach sets bar high for national team

SOCCER Men's national soccer coach Stephen Hart made it clear yesterday that his goal is to get Canada back in the World Cup mix.

"I'm only looking forward," Hart said at a news conference.

"I'm not worried about what happened before. I'm planning to get on with business."

Hart has served as interim head coach since Dale Mitchell was let go last spring, a few months after Canada posted a weak 0-4-2 record in qualifying for the 2010 World Cup.

The Canadian Soccer Association removed the interim tag from his title yesterday and announced a search will begin early next year for Hart's replacement as technical director.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

University of Alberta grad students want say in how increased tuition is spent

Graduate students at the University of Alberta want a joint panel to decide how millions of dollars generated from proposed tuition increases would be spent. The university is contemplating a series of tuition hikes it calls market modifiers, which affect mostly professional faculties where local tuition is lower than national averages. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

New blood at The Score

Today, the winner of The Score's Gillette DRAFTED: The Search for Canada's Next Sportscaster will be announced. The 24-hour sports channel has been searching Canada from coast to coast for months now and the decision will finally come down today. Don't miss it on The Score.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

It's scooter culture

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

Donning a grey flannel suit, rich Prada tie, brown shoes and matching belt, the man who whizzed past Morey Chaplick down a narrow Italian strada left the observer with a single thought: This is art on wheels.

"He just kind of oozed by me on a vintage Vespa with Louis Vuitton saddlebags. I elbowed my wife and said, 'That looks f—kin' cool'."

His instant two-wheel zeal ignited during a vacation in 2001, a time Chaplick said there wasn't a scooter to be seen on the streets of Toronto. So he decided to change that, opening his first branch of scooter lifestyle shop Motoretta in Little Italy in July 2002.

Now, more than seven years later and with two more locations, in Bloor West Village and Leaside, Chaplick said there isn't a day that goes by he doesn't see one on the road.

His sightings are supported by figures released annually by the Motorcycle and Moped Industry Council, which reported almost 11,000 scooters were sold in Canada in 2008, nearly double the 6,000 sold in 2004.

Considering it costs a couple bucks to fill the gas tank, the insurance rate is half that of cars, scooters can manoeuvre through traffic more easily and parking them is free in Toronto, buying a bike could easily be explained in terms of practicality.

But Chaplick said that's not why most people secure a scoot, and also explains why the names Fred Perry, Ben Sherman and Penguin share shelf space at Motoretta with Vespa, Piaggio and Aprilia.

"Scooters are still different enough right now where you're kind of thumbing your nose at the world," he said.

However fashionable, riding a scooter also requires ability, which manager of Humber College's motorcycle rider training program Andy Hertel and his team of nearly 100 instructors teach in the school's eight training courses.

"It can be very dangerous," said Hertel, "The skill required goes above and beyond what it is as a driver in an automobile."

Well above simply mastering stability, Humber teaches the basics of steering, turning, accelerating, braking, emergency stopping and avoiding accidents, functions that could turn fatal if performed improperly on a single-track vehicle.

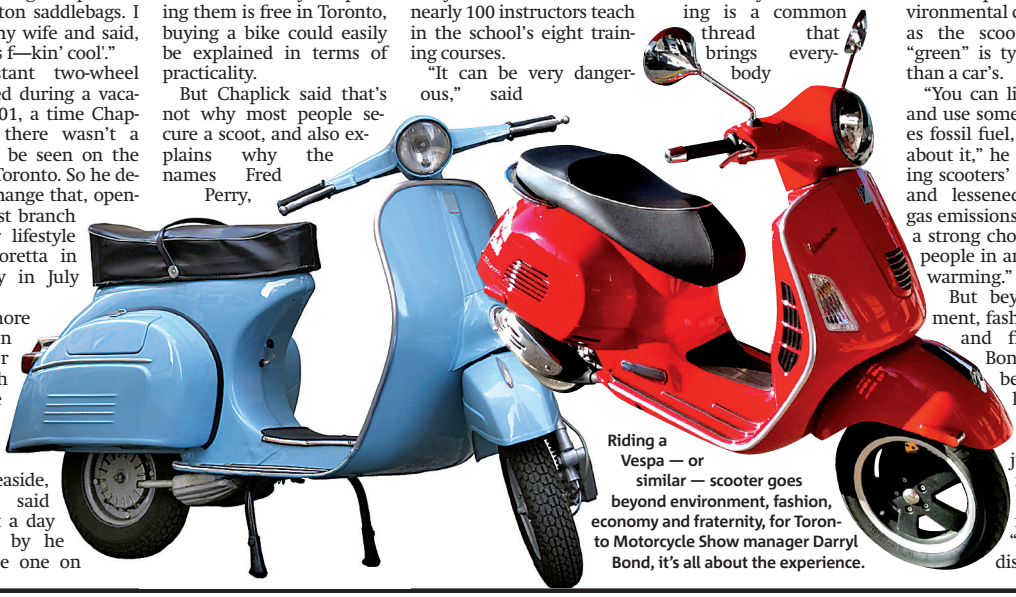
But once you learn, "riding is a common thread that brings everybody from all walks of life together," said Hertel, "You can go on a ride for an hour and talk about it for three. It's just remarkable."

Toronto Motorcycle Show manager Darryl Bond believes rider rapport may not only develop on the basis of ownership, but a shared environmental consciousness, as the scooter shade of "green" is typically bolder than a car's.

"You can literally go out and use something that uses fossil fuel, but feel good about it," he said, referencing scooters' fuel efficiency and lessened greenhouse gas emissions. "That strikes a strong chord with many people in an era of global warming."

But beyond environment, fashion, economy and fraternity, for Bond, the end benefit of riding lies in the experience.

"There's just this feeling of freedom on the road," he said. "It's all about discovery."



Riding a Vespa — or similar — scooter goes beyond environment, fashion, economy and fraternity, for Toronto Motorcycle Show manager Darryl Bond, it's all about the experience.

Wanna scoot?

- The Toronto Motorcycle Show takes place Friday through Sunday at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. For more information, visit torontomotorcycleshow.ca.

Workology in brief

CANADIAN YOUTH FACING BRUNT OF ECONOMIC DOWNTURN: According to a Labour Force Survey and the Globe and Mail, no group in Canada has been displaced more by the recession than youth, whose unemployment rate reached nearly 16 per cent last month, according to new Statistics Canada figures. The situation is especially acute among recent university graduates, say youth employment counsellors. The number of people seeking help at Toronto-based Youth Employment Services is up 40 per cent this year, and most of that surge is from recent graduates. Many young people are moving back in with their parents, but those without safety nets are turning to homeless shelters, welfare, crime, or transient work.

UWO AWARDED $19 MILLION FROM ONTARIO RESEARCH FUND: The University of Western Ontario announced Friday it has received $19 million from the Ontario Research Fund for a dozen research projects. Nearly half of the funding is going towards the Wind Engineering, Energy and Environment (WindEEE) Dome, which is used to perform experiments involving the interaction of wind and the environment. The funding for UWO is part of a broader $268-million Ontario-wide investment that will support 214 projects and over 3,300 researchers in 14 cities.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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University of Manitoba has nearly $2-billion impact on local economy
According to a new study from the University of Manitoba, over $1.8 billion in province-wide economic activity is stimulated by the institution. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Parties for you and the planet

Office shindigs can be fun, you just need the right caterer

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

When the office needs its halls decked on a budget, many companies call in the professionals to avoid turning the Christmas party into unpaid overtime. With the right caterers, companies can throw an affordable, environmentally friendly Christmas.

Toronto's Daniel et Daniel takes on extra staff to handle the business boom at Christmas. Vice-president Russell Day says the economic downturn means offices are looking to keep the annual party low key, but that low cost doesn't have to mean low fun.

"The best way is to keep it internal. Have an office party and have us come to you," says Day. Cocktail parties or lunches are popular, featuring easy, affordable menus, "so we can bring the joy to people's offices."

The key is to transform the ambience so people don't just awkwardly lean on the photocopier and wonder when they can leave. Dim the lights, light a few candles and turn on the holiday music, Day says. Daniel et Daniel will decorate, too, bringing feather trees for offices that prefer to celebrate "the holidays," rather than Christmas. Decorators can turn the reception desk into a bar, the boardroom into a buffet and even bring in lounge furniture and DJ to really spruce it up.

"All of a sudden, people are dancing on the photocopier," Day laughs. "It's not a party until it's a little rocking."

"The idea behind our company is no paper, no plastic, no styrofoam. It's more of a state of being that's important."
One Planet Catering's Michael Krauss

In Vancouver, Michael Krauss is changing the idea that Christmas equals wastefulness. One Planet Catering opened its doors in January and is gearing up for its first green Christmas. It focuses on local, organic food and creating a smaller carbon footprint.

"The idea behind our company is no paper, no plastic, no styrofoam," Krauss says. "It's more of a state of being that's important."

He decided to form his eco-catering company a few years ago when he was working at another Vancouver eatery. A girl sat at the counter opening sugar packets and writing her name in the grains while her mother ignored her.

"I thought, more than 680,000 people died in slavery being shipped from Africa into the Caribbean for the sole purpose of sugar plantation, and 150 years later we seem to have lost all the respect for where the food comes from, how it's grown. We seem to be taking food for granted," he says. "I wanted to create something that has more meaning."

If you get the right caterer, and set up your office in the right way, any office holiday party can be fun.

Career advancement is on the line at parties

HOLIDAY Santa isn't the only one making a list of naughty and nice this holiday season. A new survey by The Creative Group suggests managers also pay attention to how employees behave at their company holiday events. Nine out of 10 executives (92 per cent) polled recently said workers' office party antics can affect their career prospects.

The national study was developed by The Creative Group, a specialized staffing service providing creative, advertising, marketing and web professionals on a project and full-time basis, and conducted by an independent research firm.

Advertising and marketing executives were asked, "To what extent do you think an employee's behaviour at an office holiday party can affect — either positively or negatively — his or her career advancement prospects?"

"There often are many influential people in the room at office holiday parties," said Donna Farrugia, executive director of The Creative Group. "Although these gatherings can be festive, it's important to keep in mind that they are still work events. You want to exhibit poise and good judgment throughout, no matter how casual the celebration may seem."

Farrugia noted that office holiday parties are an opportune time to network within your company. "In many businesses, there may be few chances to mingle with corporate executives and others throughout the organization," she said. "Employees should use these events to form positive connections with colleagues outside their usual circle. Being well-networked internally can help professionals perform better and enhance their value to their firms."

Be sure to check back in tomorrow's Workology section for a story on how to survive office holiday parties, which will include everything from why workplace gatherings can cause the anxiety they do, to how to clean up after some embarrassing gaffes.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday party tips

- Give the gift of good manners. Your social graces are on display at these events, so R.S.V.P. promptly, arrive on time and thank the host for having you.
- Bring good tidings to all. Go out of your way to chat with co-workers from other departments. Also, be friendly to guests who aren't employed by your firm. They will appreciate being included in the conversation.
- Get away from the grinches. Don't spend too much time with the bah-humbug types at your holiday soiree. You want to avoid guilt by association. Plus, it's more fun to spend time with those who are enjoying themselves.

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Computer for non-work purposes
Nearly three-in-five workers (58 per cent) admitted they use the Internet for non-work related activities while at the office. Twenty-one per cent will typically spend one hour or more on personal Internet use while at work. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday shopping on the clock

Thirty-two per cent of workers plan to holiday shop online this season, up from 29 per cent last year, according to CareerBuilder's annual survey.

While employers tend to be more lenient around the holidays, experts caution workers to be aware of their company's electronic communications policies as employers have reported monitoring Internet and e-mail use and instituting stricter policies in regard to social media. The survey included more than 3,100 employers and 4,700 workers nationwide.

"The Internet provides fast and convenient access to virtually any resources you need, but you want to make sure you're leveraging those resources during personal time that is allotted to you during the workday, such as your lunch hour," said CareerBuilder's Rosemary Haefner. "Nearly half of employers reported they monitor Internet and e-mail use of employees. While employers will take into consideration the overall performance of the employee, smaller staffs and higher productivity demands may have them taking more notice of time spent on non-work related activities. This extends to all types of communications and activities."

Social Media and Internet Restrictions — What Workers Should Know Before They Post

Social media has become pervasive for personal and business use. Sixty-one per cent of full-time workers reported they have a social networking profile. Among them:

- Half of workers (51 per cent) spend time on their social networking page during the workday; 11 per cent spend one hour or more.
- 25 per cent include information about their employer in their communications on social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace; 15 per cent include company information on Twitter; 13 per cent of workers with personal blogs say they blog about their companies.
- 13 per cent of workers are "friends" with their boss on their social networking profile.
- 22 per cent of workers have separate social networking profiles for personal and business use.

With social media becoming a key avenue for employers to promote their brands, products and services and job opportunities, companies are taking a closer look at how messages about the company are communicated.

- 37 per cent of employers have a policy on whether workers can communicate about the company on social media sites.
- 21 per cent prohibit employees from communicating about the company.

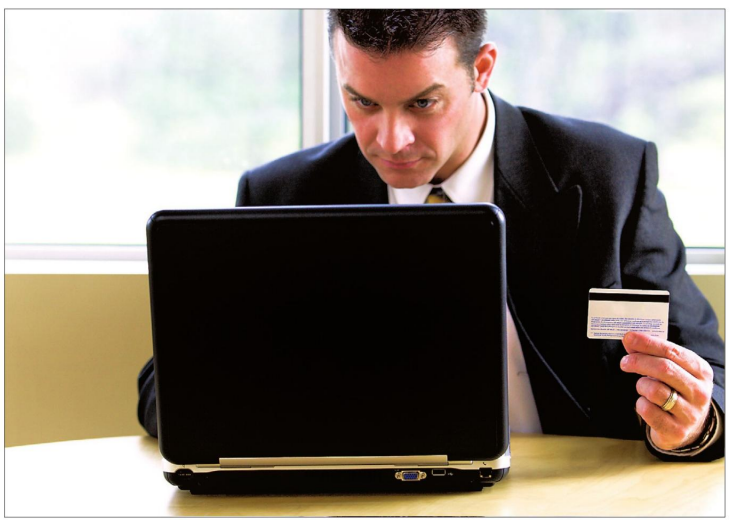
Thirteen per cent have designated certain employees to post on behalf of the company.

Workers are advised to limit their Internet searches to those related to work or to designate their lunch hour or break time for these activities.

- 20 per cent of employers have fired someone for using the Internet for non-work related activities.
- five per cent of employers have fired someone for holiday shopping online at work.
- Half of employers block employees from accessing certain websites while at work. METRO NEWS SERVICES

E-mail too

- Workers are also cautioned about e-mail content as two-thirds have reported they typically send non-work related e-mails each day.
- 32 per cent of employers monitor e-mails and 16 per cent monitor instant messaging.
- eight per cent have fired someone for non-work related e-mails.


You might be surprised how many people plan to shop for the holidays at work this year.

Workology in brief

FNUC'S CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER FIRED: Murray Westerlund, the chief financial officer of First Nations University of Canada, has been fired, the CBC reported Friday. However, FNUC's president says the school and Westerlund had mutually agreed to part ways. Westerlund joined FNUC in 2005 with a mandate to sort out the school's finances. At the time, FNUC was accused of lacking financial controls. The CFO's apparent sudden departure is raising questions about the state of FNUC. Student advocates told the CBC that there is a sense of turmoil within senior administration. A year ago the Canadian Association of University Teachers censured the institution for ongoing failure to address serious governance issues. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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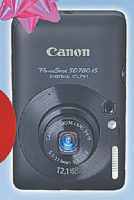

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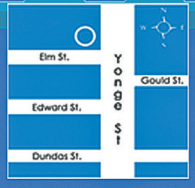

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Health & Beauty

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Latest fitness trends coming in 2010

What's In and What's Out for those who are looking to stay in shape next year

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

In a world where nothing stands still, fitness is no exception. Things are moving fast, and workouts, to stay relevant, have to be quick, efficient and lively.

Metro asked Geoff Bagshaw, group exercise director of Denman Fitness in Vancouver, to shine a light on the trends. When it comes to exercise in 2010, here's a look at what's IN and what's OUT.

What's IN

"Strength Training is probably the biggest trend for 2010," says Bagshaw. "The public is much more educated about the benefits of strength training; they realize the importance of including this in their workouts. Especially with the aging population, the emphasis on resistance training will be even greater."

Kettlebell Training will also be "in." For the uninitiated, a kettlebell looks like a large, black bowling ball, with a suitcase handle on it. It comes in different weights and people like seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong like to hoist a few.

Cross-Fit programs use movements based on gymnastics, weight-lifting, Kettlebell training and calisthenics.

"The workouts use whole body exercises rather than isolated movements to better mimic actions that are performed in everyday life," says Bagshaw.

TANNIS TOOHEY/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Kettlebell training is one of the What's In fitness training methods for 2010.

"The workouts use whole body exercises rather than isolated movements to better mimic actions that are performed in everyday life." Geoff Bagshaw

Zumba and dance-based classes are on the rise Thanks to shows like So You Think You Can Dance' and Dancing with the Stars, the popularity of dance-based group exercise classes has taken off. "Zumba, in particular, with its Latin dance moves and rhythms, has almost developed a cult-like following around the world," says Bagshaw.

Fusion workouts are hot, hot, hot.

These are workouts that combine two or more disciplines into one program. "We often see names like Koga (Kickboxing and Yoga), Yogilates (Yoga and Pilates), Iron Yoga (Yoga using handweights), and Yoga Booty Ballet (Hip Hop, Yoga and Ballet combined)," says Bagshaw.

Express workouts.

These are often just 30 minutes in length, so people can get in and out of the gym quickly.

Including a shower, you can be back at work in 45 minutes.

What's OUT

Jumping on a cardio machine such as a rower, stationary bike or treadmill and then calling it a day is very out.

Singular workouts, such as running or walking are out.

Always add some stretching, weight-lifting and balance exercises to heighten the fitness experience.

Traditional aerobic and step-based group fitness classes are on the decline, says Bagshaw.

You can't jog off a night of drinking

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

FITNESS Jogging off your hangover?

Drank too much at a Christmas party last night?

A British government survey recently found that almost one in five people admitted to exercising as a way of "making up for" a bout of heavy drinking.

But exercising does not undo the damage caused by over-indulging.

It may help you feel better in the short term, and certainly regular exercise is good for you, but working out doesn't negate the effects that a binge has on your liver.

Cirrhosis of the liver is a silent disease which develops over time from excess alcohol consumption.

Canadian guidelines suggest women consume no more than nine drinks a week and men 14.

And no, it's not advised to drink them all at once on Friday night.

Health in brief

GARLIC When crushed or sliced, fresh garlic releases a substance called allicin, which is thought to have both antiviral and antibacterial properties.

MUSHROOMS Certain varieties, including shitake, reishi, and maitake, contain potent poly-saccharides, sugar compounds that can increase white blood cell levels and prevent infection.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Make shopping a workout

Use your Christmas rounds to get your heart rate up and your arms toned

ROMINA MCGUINNESS
Metro World News

Christmas is all about giving gifts to the ones you love and obviously, endless trips to the shops. If this is eating into your allocated gym slot, why not make the most of this imposed shopping spree?

Metro talks to celebrity trainer Ramona Braganza and gets the top tips on how to turn Christmas shopping into a fabulous workout. Simply minus the gingerbread latte.

WEIGHT IT OUT

Carry all your shopping bags.

The extra weight you carry around will provide you with a great arm workout, perfect for toning and strengthening.

Make sure you have a good stretch before you shop; arm circles and neck rolls will avoid you feeling strained through there the day after

MUSCLES FOR WHEELS

Avoid jumping on every bus in sight to get you to your shopping destination of choice.

When possible, walk or ride your bike into town. As you walk from store toston do some intervals of fast and slow pace, which will act as a mini workout.

Wear a heart rate monitor that counts calories and see how many calories you burn, and if you can push yourself harder next time.

ODE TO OXYGEN

Avoid the stuffy air of a shopping mall, preferring the outdoors.

The cold weather will keep your metabolism going and the fresh air will oxygenate your lungs.

Don't buy everything in one go.

Going up and down the same street several times to go back and get an item will force you into doing some extra walking.

CLIMB

Shops are designed to make things easy for their customers, escalators being fitted inside nearly every single store.

Why not try take the stairs instead — carry your bags and you will double your workout efforts.

STAY IN MOTION

The repetitive sitting and standing up motion of shopping, whether trying on shoes or clothes is a similar motion to that of a squat.

If you are waiting in line for a purchase do some core training.

Pull your belly-button into your spine as you stand there.

Hold for three seconds then release. Repeat this 10 times (the queue tends to be long).

FUEL UP

Avoid the mid afternoon slump (more like chocolate craving) that will inevitably undo all your hard work.

Instead, pack some snacks in your handbag, such as nuts or dried fruit you can nibble on throughout the day.

Drink a litre or two of water whilst you are out shopping.

Staying hydrated boosts your metabolism and keeps all systems in your body functioning at optimum performance.

Health tip

- One cup of chopped red peppers provides 190 mg of vitamin C–more than twice the amount found in an orange–which raises levels of immune-protecting natural killer cells.

METRO WORLD NEWS

How to lose the holiday stress

HEART Perhaps the best gift this season will be tips on how to handle holiday shopping stress

What do you do if you're feeling hassled with all of the activity that happens in the lead up to Christmas? Simply take a moment to close your eyes and notice your breath.

Then, try to slow your breath down, making each inhale and each exhale a little longer and more full.

This will immediately lower your blood pressure and your heart rate, and give you a greater sense of peace and wellbeing. It will also help you think twice about over-spending on your credit card.

Katrina Repka is the author of Breathing Space: Twelve Lessons for the Modern Woman. Find out more at: katrinarepka.com. METRO WORLD NEWS

Fuel up on tasty macdemia nuts

HEALTH The buttery macadamia nut is not only heavenly, but healthy. Containing up to 85 per cent monosaturated fat — the same fat found in olive oil — regular consumption is great for lowering cholesterol and the rsik of cardio vascular disease Macadamias are also a fantastic source of potassium, calcium and magnesium.

METRO WORLD NEWS

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ROMINA MCGUINESS
for Metro Toronto

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Get toned and have fun. Hoopilates tones and sculpts the entire body, from your abdominals, to your hips to our thighs. "Although Hula Hooping is very much about connecting with your inner child, this is an adult workout," explains Saharah Ali, Hoopilates trainer at Crunch Gym New York.

Hopping to Hoop

The entire body is engaged throughout the class, from your muscles to your mind. The class begins with ten minutes of intense hula hopping in order to get the heart rate going, burn fat and increase the cardio vascular system. You Hula to the right then to the left incorporating arm moves and leg lifts as you go along. This will make you leaner and stronger from head to toe. Good bye doughnut rolls and muffin tops, Hoopilates will leave you trimmed and sculpted.

"Although Hula Hooping is very much about connecting with your inner child, this is an adult workout." Saharah Ali

A whole lotta Hula

The main challenge of the workout is keeping the Hula Hoop up and retaining your body balance. Concentration is key as you need to focus on your hand and eye coordination. The workout helps revitalize the nervous system, helping to keep your mind alert, and reversing the aging process.

"Hoopilates creates the same mental stimulation as doing a crossword puzzle, the brain is working alongside the body throughout — it's a 360 degrees class" says Ali.

Ali will alternate the intense hula hoping bursts with mat Pilates every ten minutes of a one-hour class. "We'll do scissor kicks, hundreds, the saw, leg bounces and sometimes use smaller hula hoops for balance work. We end the class by picking up the Hula Hoops one last time and go as fast as our hips will rotate."

In Vogue

One average people will burn between 300 to 500 calories in one session. It's great for those people who want a non-aggressive workout (no strain is applied on joints or the back) and those with balance problems. Hoopilates is ideal for those who have an issue with hard core cardio such as running or aerobics. Hoopilates is also a personality based, you need to lose all inhibitions before you start sweating to the music. Saharah Ali's favorite music tune to get the hoop rolling? Vogue, by eighties Pop Icon, Madonna followed by the Black Eyed Peas, Where'd you get your body from.

METRO WORLD NEWS

U.S. first lady Michelle Obama gets her hula on.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Hula hooping is the latest fitness craze in New York gyms.

The unknown rules and risks of taking antibiotic medications

HEALTH Most of us have heard the cardinal rules of antibiotics.

Don't take them when they aren't needed. And when they are prescribed, take every last pill — do not stop just because you start to feel better.

There are other rules, however, that many of us may not know. And some myths that we think are true but are not.

The missing information and the misconceptions can keep you from taking antibiotics appropriately, meaning you may not get the maximum benefit and may put yourself at risk of developing a drug-resistant infection in the process.

Taking the pills correctly may be at least as important as taking all of the pills in your prescription, experts say.

Interactions with foods, other drugs and even supplements like multivitamins can interfere with the body's ability to absorb antibiotics.

The consequence? You end up getting a lower dose than you need to kill those germs.

"If it isn't being absorbed, for whatever reason ... then it's not going to get to the site of infection at adequate levels to appropriately treat the infection," Dr. Andrew Simor, chief microbiologist at Toronto's Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, explains.

"And you run the risk of not responding to treatment or of having subtherapeutic levels of an antibiotic that can promote resistance."

KEVIN FRAYER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Most of us have heard the cardinal rules of antibiotics. Don't take them when they aren't needed. And when they are prescribed, take every last pill — do not stop just because you start to feel better.

But taking antibiotics properly can be tough, especially if you are prescribed one of the older types. Some newer antibiotics use a one-pill-a-day regimen, but older types may require you to pop three or four pills a day — on an empty stomach.

Remembering to take them an hour before eating or a couple of hours after eating can be difficult. But forgetting and taking them on even a semi-full stomach can mean your body only absorbs a half or a quarter of the active ingredient in the drug, says Clarence Chant, a pharmacist at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto who works in the intensive care unit and specializes in infectious diseases.

Under those circumstances, you are essentially under-dosing yourself. And that can give rise to antibiotic resistance. That's because when you have a bacterial infection, you aren't harbouring a single bug, but a swarm of a type of bug — whether that's Strep or Staph or some other bacterium. If you are infected with bacteria that are susceptible to antibiotics, most members of that hoard will be vulnerable to the drug. But there can be a few in the crowd that have mutations that let them fight off the antibiotic if the level of the drug in your system is too low. If you are getting a sub-optimal dose because you are taking your antibiotics incorrectly, you could end up killing off only the weaker bacteria. The result: The resistant ones survive. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Working out over Christmas

How to stay fit when pressed for time during the holiday season

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

The holidays are coming, and with them lots of delicious temptations and less time to exercise. But you'd be surprised how little time you need to squeeze in some meaningful fitness, says Marci Lall, a weight loss and body sculpting specialist in Toronto.

Even if you take 10 minutes early in the morning and 10 minutes before bed, these mini-workouts will pay off, he says.

"These can lead to great results when the holidays are a drag on the amount of time you have available."

He has developed for Metro a quick workout you can do if you set aside either 10, 20 or 30 minutes.

"When you find yourself with a little break between holiday responsibilities, you can use that time to get a short exercise session in. This will add up and deliver much-needed calorie burning and enhanced cardio health."

If you have 10 minutes, do each exercise for 30 seconds, and aim for three sets. Always rest in between sets. If you have 20 minutes, do each exercise for 30 seconds, for five sets. If you have 30 minutes, do each exercise for 1 minute, for five sets.

CELIA MILNE/FOR METRO CANADA

Lunges are a quick way to keep your legs toned.

"These can lead to great results when the holidays are a drag on the amount of time you have available."
Marci Lall, weight loss expert

PLIÉ LUNGES

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, hands on your hips.
- With one leg, step in and behind you (see photo), bringing your knee toward the ground (don't let it touch the ground).
- Use your legs to push yourself back up to the starting position; repeat using the opposite leg.
- Keep your back straight throughout the exercise.

T-PUSH UPS

- Get into a push-up position with the balls of your feet on the floor and your hands directly under your shoulders.
- Do a push-up as you would normally by bending your elbows and bringing your chest toward the ground. When you come back up to the starting position, rotate your body, lifting your arm out to the side to make a "T" with your body.
- As you push yourself upward, breathe out through your mouth.

SQUAT PULSES

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart with your back straight and head looking forward.
- Squat down so your knees are bent and your butt sticks out to the back.
- You can reach your hands in front of you for counter balance so you don't fall backward.
- Once you're in the down position, slowly pulse up and down to give your thighs a nice burn.

PLANK

- Get into push-up position, resting on your forearms and the balls of your feet.
- Make sure your elbows are aligned directly under your shoulders; hold this position while maintaining a straight back.
- Breathe naturally.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

- Position yourself in a push-up position with one leg bent and close to your hand, kind of like a sprinter's starting position.
- Keep your head forward and your back leg extended out.
- Simultaneously switch your bent leg with your extended leg.
- Your opposite leg should be close to your hand and the leg that was bent should now be extended to the back.
- Get into a rhythm and perform this exercise smoothly.

Young adults more often prone to anger: Study

STUDY Young adults — who are more likely to feel time pressure, financial pressure and workplace stress — experience anger more often than older adults.

That is a finding from a survey of more than 1,000 Americans done by Prof. Scott Schieman from the Sociology Department at the University of Toronto. Schieman's findings will be included in the new International Handbook of Anger to be released in Jan. 2010. Certain life circumstances are conducive to anger, he found. They include feeling rushed, having young children in the home, and experiencing money problems. Perhaps not surprisingly, people with a higher education were less likely to experience anger; they were more inclined to try to change stressful situations and talk things over than those with less education.

CELIA MILNE/FOR METRO CANADA

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Cheating athletes nothing new: Vogels

Tiger Wood's alleged multiple affairs just the tip of the iceberg for 'culture of adultery'

The J Spot

Tiger Woods' bizarre Nov. 27 car accident has brought his troubled marriage and seemingly multiple affairs to light. The fact that the world's greatest golf player — an international sports hero and a family man with a squeaky clean image — also cheated on his wife has come as a shock to a lot of people.

But, as it turns out, seems Tiger's just like most of the rest of them.

According to a CNN report earlier this year — when former NFL star Steve McNair was shot to death by his 20-year-old mistress — 80 to 90 per cent of pro athletes cheat on their wives. And, after interviewing 47 wives of professional athletes, Steven M. Ortiz, an assistant professor of sociology at Oregon State University concluded that a "culture of adultery" permeates professional sports today and that there is "a fast-food-sex mentality among professional athletes."

As with rock stars and politicians, the money, power and fame combined with the fact that you're constantly on the road without your wife and surrounded by admirers is a strong aphrodisiac that can make "because you can" a good enough reason to cheat.

"There is certainly a different code for athletes than there is for the average guy," says Montreal sportscaster Mitch Melnick. "It's not necessarily that athlete's are hornier, they just have more opportunity and access to sex."

Michael Landsberg, host of TSN's Off the Record once told me that "professional athletes don't even have to try, they can be devoid of any charisma, they can look bad, even smell bad and there will be women who will leave with them."

But, as far as I'm concerned, the athletes aren't the only part of the "culture of adultery" that stinks.

In a feature for GQ magazine in 2006, Lisa DePaulo hung out with sports groupies and discovered that, "Gutter Groupies wait in parking lots after games and are happy just to give oral sex to an athlete (heck, even a bodyguard will do) while Fly Girls have something more going on.

They are just classy enough to often merit oral sex a second time. Sometimes there is jewelry involved."

And what of the wives? I'm sure — for some of the very reasons above — that being married to a pro-athlete is no picnic. But are they merely innocent bystanders? It's been reported that Tiger's wife is being offered a big chunk of change to stick with him in order to maintain his good-guy public image.

I can only imagine what that must feel like.

Um, I'd like you meet my damage control, I mean my wife.

Frankly, it all smells pretty rotten to me.

Tiger Woods and his wife Elin are the latest sports couple to have their dirty laundry aired.

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.

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Positive and pregnant

More women with HIV looking to have kids

A significant proportion of HIV-positive women of child-bearing age want to become pregnant at some point in the future, a new study shows, although extra care is needed to prevent transmission of the virus to their babies.

The findings, published online yesterday by the open access journal PLoS One, point to the need for more services and support for these women so they can have healthy children, researchers say.

The study focused on women in Ontario, and found that 69 per cent of those who responded to a detailed questionnaire expressed a desire to have a baby, while 57 per cent said they actually intend to become pregnant.

Dr. Mona Loutfy, an infectious disease specialist at Women's College Hospital in Toronto who sees a lot of HIV-positive patients, and her colleagues recruited 490 women from 38 sites across Ontario to complete the survey between Oct. 2007 and April 2009.

57 The percentage of women polled who are HIV-positive and intend to become pregnant.

"When I was seeing my patients a lot of them were saying that they were interested in pregnancy," she said in an interview.

"They weren't being supported either by their family doctors or other doctors, or by the system, including fertility clinics."

When HIV-AIDS appeared on the scene in North America in the 1980s, life expectancy for those afflicted was short and most HIV-positive women were focused on survival, not contemplating becoming pregnant.

That's all changed and Loutfy noted that HIV can be "very well managed" today.

"We have 25 anti-HIV drugs, and if we use three of them in combination and the patients take their drugs and don't miss pills, their life expectancy is now said to be similar to the general population," she said.

"If a woman's HIV-positive, we can give her the same drugs and ask her to not breastfeed and the baby has less than one per cent chance of getting infected with HIV."

Studies involving hundreds of thousands of babies born to HIV-positive women taking antiretroviral drugs in the United States and France found that they had no problems compared to those in the general population, Loutfy said.

"So putting all that together, I think we're at a point now where we can support HIV-positive women and men and couples with their pregnancy planning desires."

A few years ago in British Columbia, a similar survey found only about 30 per cent of HIV-positive women were interested in pregnancy, Loutfy said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Should I Trade In My Car To Get A Better Rate?

Probably not. If you are in the market for a new or used car, considering the cost of insurance (or the "total cost of ownership") when making your purchase decision makes a lot of sense. However, switching cars for the sole purpose of getting a lower rate may not be your best option. Why? Because the type of car you drive is just ONE of a host of variables used by insurance companies in setting your rate. And there are far better ways of lowering your car insurance costs…if you know where to look.

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The simplest and easiest thing you can do to lower your rate right now is to SHOP AROUND. Why? Because the rates charged by different insurance companies to insure the same driver, with the same car, for the same coverage, can vary by hundreds and even thousands of dollars. Take a look at the table below.

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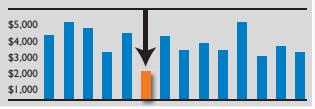

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The taco gets a makeover

This month Taco Bell goes back to the basics with its new jet black corn taco shell. Along with the shell makeover, this new treat includes a special zesty pepper jack sauce. The tacos cost $1.30 each and are available until Jan. 10, 2010. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Food

Party appetizers

Tips on planning appetizers for a holiday cocktail party: As guests arrive, welcome them with spreads, dips and crudites, seasoned nuts and appetizers that you can arrange hours ahead and that won't go soggy in the fridge. As the party gets underway, serve appetizers that require last-minute arranging. Surround pates or terrines with crackers and breads, then garnish. Source: The Complete Christmas Book by The Editors of Canadian Living Magazine. THE CANADIAN PRESS

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Canadian Living magazine is on sale now!

Canadian Living recipe of the month

Delicious comfort dishes

There's a love affair between Canadians and their slow cookers.

I've heard them called everything from a "life-saver" to a "marriage saver." While I'm not sure I'd go quite that far, the slow cooker certainly has earned a spot in a growing number of kitchens. Bubbling away on the counter, it delivers reliably delicious braised and pot roasted dishes, sustaining soups, chilis, curries and pasta sauces, vegetables and much more. It even makes drinks, comfy desserts, dips and spreads.

The key is finding a really good cookbook to make your slow cooker work even harder. Look no further: The Slow Cooker Collection, our newest book, has arrived. It's well stocked with family-pleasing everyday favourites and dishes that take the fuss out of entertaining. Here's a small sampling to tease your taste buds.

It's slow cooker season!

Chicken Squash Curry from Canadian Living's newest book, The Slow Cooker Collection.

Sun-Dried Tomato and Artichoke Dip

MAKES 3 CUPS

This is a perennial party pleaser, one that's easy to make with pantry staples. Serve with a variety of crackers, pita chips and vegetables.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can (14 oz/398 mL) artichoke hearts
- 1 pkg (8 oz/250 g) cream cheese, cubed and softened
- 1/2 cup each sour cream and mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped drained oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 2 tbsp chopped green onion

METHOD:

1. Drain artichoke hearts; pat dry and chop. Add to 1 1/2-quart (1.5 L) slow cooker along with cream cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise, Parmesan, sun-dried tomatoes, garlic and pepper; stir to combine.
2. Cover and cook on low, stirring twice, until blended and hot, about two hours. Sprinkle with green onion.

Wine-Braised Brisket

MAKES 10 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/4 tsp salt
- 3/4 tsp pepper
- 3/4 tsp crumbled dried rosemary
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 4 lb double beef brisket pot roast
- 2 large onions, sliced
- 3/4 cup dry red wine
- 1/2 cup beef broth
- 1/2 cup thawed cranberry cocktail concentrate
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 4 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour

METHOD:

1. In large bowl, combine salt, pepper, rosemary and cayenne pepper; rub about half over brisket. Toss onions in remaining spice mixture. Arrange brisket on onions in bowl, fat side up.
2. In separate bowl, stir wine, broth, cranberry concentrate, soy sauce and garlic; pour over brisket. Cover and refrigerate for at least 12 hours or for up to 24 hours.
3. Transfer onions and liquid to 5- to 6-quart (5 to 6 L) slow cooker; top with brisket. Cover and cook on low until meat is fall-apart tender, about 5 to 6 hours.
4. Transfer brisket to cutting board; cover and keep warm for 20 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, skim fat from liquid in slow cooker. In bowl, whisk flour with 1/3 cup (75 mL) water; whisk into liquid.
5. Cover and cook on high until thickened, about 20 minutes. (Make-ahead: Let brisket and sauce cool separately for 30 minutes. Combine brisket and sauce in uncovered airtight container; refrigerate until cold. Cover and refrigerate for up to two days or freeze for up to one month.)
6. Slice brisket across the grain. Serve with sauce.

Chicken Squash Curry

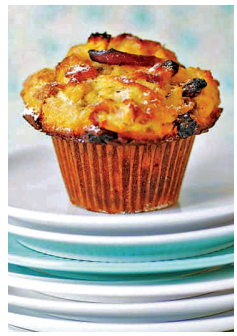
PREP TIME: 8 MINUTES / COOK TIME: MAKES 4 SERVINGS26 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 lb boneless skinless chicken thighs, cubed
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 hot green peppers, seeded and chopped
- 2 cups cubed seeded peeled butternut squash (about 1 lb/500 g)
- 3 Tbsp mild Indian curry paste
- 1 can (28 oz/796 mL) diced tomatoes
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh coriander

METHOD

1. In Dutch oven, heat half of the oil over medium-high heat; brown chicken. Remove to plate.
2. In same Dutch oven, heat remaining oil over medium heat; cook onion and hot peppers, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes.
3. Add squash and curry paste; cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute.
4. Add tomatoes and bring to boil, scraping up brown bits. Return chicken and any juices to pan. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until squash is tender, about 20 minutes. Sprinkle with coriander.



Bread pudding muffins.

Let the festive baking begin

RECIPE Here is a delectable recipes to try for your holiday baking. It is a delightful bread pudding muffin ideal for either breakfast or dessert, created by pastry chef Marcy Goldman. These mini puddings consist of bread chunks in a buttery, cream-laced custard.

Bread Pudding Muffins

MAKES 12 MUFFINS

INGREDIENTS:

- 1.75 l (7 cups) cubed challah, brioche or croissants
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) milk
- 375 ml (1 1/2 cups) warm half-and-half or light cream
- 4 eggs
- 150 ml (2/3 cup) sugar
- 10 ml (2 tsp) pure vanilla extract
- 15 ml (1 Tbsp) brandy (optional)
- 125 ml (1/2 cup or 4 oz) unsalted butter, melted
- 75 ml (1/3 cup) all-purpose flour
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) baking powder
- 1.5 ml (3/8 tsp) salt
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) ground cinnamon
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) golden raisins, plumped and patted dry
- Icing sugar mixed with a touch of cocoa or cinnamon, for dusting

Read more on page 43 ››

Blumer culinary adventures
Host Bob Blumer returns with Glutton for Punishment season four on Jan. 4. It premieres at 7:30 p.m. on the Food Network Canada. In this final season of the series, Blumer tackles 13 exciting food challenges around the globe. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Powell's new meaty read

Julie & Julia author dishes on butchery, affairs and all that is messy

Julie Powell's new book is not for the squeamish, in more ways than one.

It opens with her in the back of a butcher shop, flecked with blood and reeking of meat. She's busy slicing a raw, slippery liver with a foot-long knife.

By the end of the book, another internal organ — her heart — has been filleted: Powell dissects the pain caused by her two-year affair with an old college flame that sent her into an emotional tailspin and almost sunk her marriage.

It's all a bit, well, messy. What happened to our spunky blogger and best-selling author with a "sainted husband" who spent a year making Julia Child's food, the young woman whose story made up half of the charming Nora Ephron-directed film Julie & Julia?

Powell, in an interview at a coffee shop near her Queens home, admits readers may find her sophomore effort — titled Cleaving: A Story of Marriage, Meat and Obsession — a bit jarring.

"People coming from the movie Julie & Julia and picking up Cleaving are going to be in for some emotional whiplash," she says, laughing. "I don't believe it's going to be a Nora Ephron movie."

While there are a dozen or so recipes, this is definitely not a cookbook. Instead, Powell reveals the pain of loving two men at once, of her fondness for sado-masochism and even a bout of self-punishing sex with a stranger.

"It's darker in certain ways, definitely," says Powell's editor, Judith Clain. "But I guess, for me, I wouldn't have been interested in a sort of sweet sequel to the first book. To me, it wouldn't have been as interesting."

Powell, 36, began her affair in 2004 as she was putting the finishing touches on her first book, a time she writes she was "starry-eyed and vaguely discontented and had too much time on my hands." By 2006, she had landed an apprenticeship at a butcher shop two hours north of New York City, which offered an escape from her crumbling marriage and a place to explore her childhood curiosity with butchers.

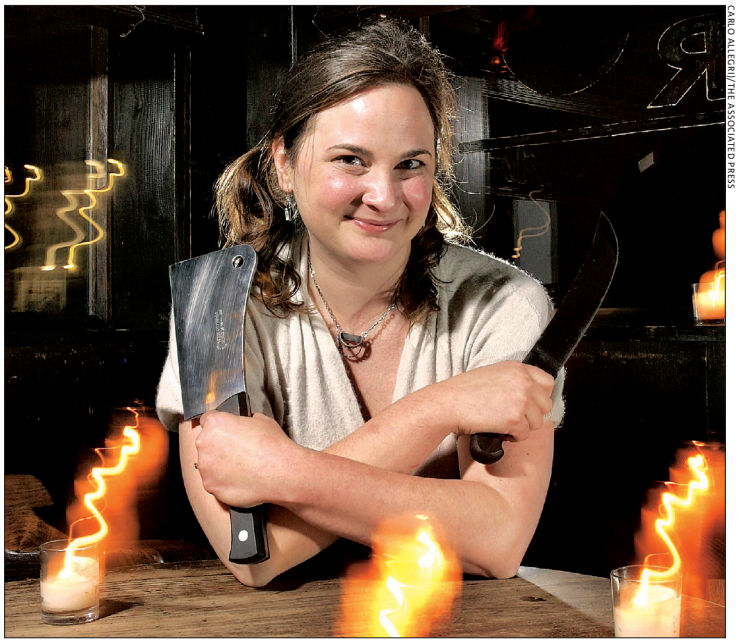
Why butchers? She says she's always been attracted to their authority, machismo and mysterious skills. "The way they held a knife in their hand was like an extension of themselves," she says. "I'm a very clumsy person. I don't play sports. That kind of physical skill is really foreign to me and I'm really envious of that."

In the book, Powell alternates tales of how she learned to slice pork loins and break down sides of beef with graphic details about cheating on her husband, who finds out about the betrayal and embarks on his own affair in response. The Powells somehow stay together, miserably.

"My goal is to stay honest and to stay close to the bone," she says in the interview. "My actions were not particularly justifiable, but I needed to explore where they were coming from and what that was all about."

Her prose explores the link between butchering and her own tortured romantic life. At one point, while cutting the connective tissue on a pig's leg, she writes: "It's sad, but a relief as well, to know that two things so closely bound together can separate with so little violence, leaving smooth surfaces instead of bloody shreds."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS


CARLO ALLEGRI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Julie & Julia blogger Julie Powell explores the link between butchering and her tortured romantic life in her sophomore book Cleaving: A Story of Marriage, Meat and Obsession.

"People coming from the movie Julie & Julia and picking up Cleaving are going to be in for some emotional whiplash."
Julie Powell, author

Mini pudding cups with bread chunks & cream-laced custard

Continued from page 42 ››

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 180 C (350 F). Line 12 muffin cups with paper liners or spray generously with non-stick cooking spray. Grease the top of the muffin pan. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Set aside.

Pour all but 500 ml (2 cups) of the bread cubes in a large bowl. Add milk and cream and let stand for 3 minutes, then stir to mush up some of the cubes and let the liquid soak in. Stir in eggs, sugar, vanilla, brandy and butter. In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking powder, salt and cinnamon, then stir into wet ingredients. Add raisins and stir well to make a chunky batter. Stir in reserved breads cubes just to mix.

Using a large ice-cream scoop, fill each muffin cup to just over the rim. Place muffin pan on prepared baking sheet.

Bake for about 30 minutes or until muffins are golden with the tips of the firmer bread cubes golden brown. Let cool in pan for 5 minutes. Unmould onto a serving platter on a wire rack, then dust with icing sugar.

Source: The New Best of BetterBaking.com by Marcy Goldman. THE CANADIAN PRESS

LiquidAssets

Peter Rockwell

metronews.ca/liquidassets

Brandy's bad rap

You've got to feel sorry for brandy. Long associated with cigar smoking old men; even getting name dropped in dozens of rap songs hasn't made it any more hip hop to drink.

The price is one problem. A decent brandy will set you back at least $20 with many — especially a top drawer French Cognac — well over $50. There's more trouble in the glass. Brandy may be distilled wine but its flavour can come across full-bodied and boozy with what seems like a raw, burnt-like taste. Plus, other than service from a snifter, what can you do with it?

To bring brandy into the 21st century its makers have reported for kitchen duty: looking for ways to associate their spirit with food and encouraging you to pour their creations ice cold.

I gave it a try by popping a bottle of **Rémy Martin's V.S.O.P. Cognac** ($67.49 - $87.95) into my refrigerator's freezer for a couple of hours and was impressed to find how the chill softened the perception of alcohol and enhanced its creamy butterscotch flavours; making it a great match with savory foods like smoked salmon, gorgonzola cheese and tuna sushi.

Peter Rockwell is the everyman's wine writer, working in the liquor industry for more than 25 years and travelling the globe looking for something to fill his glass and put into words.

Coldplay works with Eno again
Coldplay is working with Brian Eno again on a new album. Frontman Chris Martin hopes the legendary music producer can help make the group's next LP sound more intimate. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Entertainment

Adams Family
Amy Adams is pregnant with her first child, according to People magazine. Adams and her fiancé, Darren Legallo, were engaged last year. The baby is due early next year. POPEATER.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Idol stint helped Pigott land Erica gig

Pigott

PEOPLE You could consider it lucky that Sebastian Pigott's biggest acting gig to date also allowed him to show off his musical chops. He certainly does.

"That was the gift of this job, to get to play and write (music) as a part of the show," says the 26-year-old Torontonian, who played rock star-cum-barista Kai on CBC series Being Erica. The season finale airs tonight at 9 p.m.

The last time Pigott was on TV in a big way, in the summer of 2008, it was all about the music. He made it to the top eight of Canadian Idol.It turns out that had something to do with him getting the Erica job.

"Sebastian's appearance on Canadian Idol was important because we were looking for somebody who was authentically a musician," says series creator Jana Sinyor. "

Playing Kai meant mining feelings of self-loathing and insecurity, as well as the emotion of his father dying when Pigott was a child. "I feel Erica is one of the best shows we've got up here. It's not derivative; it's not trying to be an American show."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Searching for balance

Chantal Kreviazuk stays connected to her children while on tour

KUMAR SAHA
Metro Canada

For Chantal Kreviazuk, a typical day on her current Canadian tour is a balancing act: Call her three boys in the morning. Get her vocals up to par for the show. Sneak out little moments to iChat with the kids. Sing her heart out on stage. Call the kids again before their bedtime.

"I'm pretty useless to them in the mothering role day-to-day right now out on the road. I can imagine how people who are away for extended periods from their children can be a little complacent and apathetic about calling, because it can often be more damaging than good sometimes. You can call and they can be frantic about saying goodbye," says the 35-year-old singer-songwriter.

"You have to get past that and realize that the child still needs to know that you love them and you are thinking about them."

This search for equilibrium between her musical and family roles seeps into Kreviazuk's latest album, Plain Jane — a title that might as well be the way the Winnipeg native would like to identify herself these days.

SInger-songwriter Chantal Kreviazuk plays Toronto's Massey Hall tonight.

Being plain and ordinary doesn't come easy to someone who has been a staple on Canadian charts since her 1996 debut Under These Rocks and Stones. A long-standing marriage to Raine Maida, frontman of Toronto band Our Lady Peace, isn't exactly a recipe for anonymity either, nor is a home in the Big Smoke a secluded retreat for a Canuck pop couple. But what allows Kreviazuk to step out of the spotlight is her life in Los Angeles, where she can remain in the background crafting hits for artists such as Kelly Clarkson and Gwen Stefani.

"We're focused on family … and our second jobs as songwriters in a totally different market place, different nation. It's been a brilliant thing. I like me way better than I would have if I had been just the girl in Canada with the microscope on myself," she says.

Her self-effacing approach works well when it comes to family. But that doesn't necessarily mean she allows herself to get dwarfed by the million-selling singers she collaborates with in L.A.

"I realize that they came to me because there was something about me the artist that they wanted. So I should be building that into the songwriting process with them," she says.

And if there's something of her that the self-proclaimed "live performance junkie" wants to get across in the music is authenticity and humility.

"I feel like being more of an artist that people can relate to. I never wanted to be Beyoncé, I never wanted to be Madonna. I wanted to be a singer-songwriter on a life journey … I wanted to be relatable on a very realistic level."

Song Quest

- Chantal Kreviazuk is one of 13 artists selected for CBC Radio 2's Great Canadian Song Quest. Hear her song at cbc.ca/radio2/songquest.

> **"We're focused on family ... and our second jobs as songwriters in a totally different market place, different nation."**
> Chantal Kreviazuk

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Allen headed to the country
Lily Allen is buying a $2.6 million U.S. country mansion. The singer — who has always lived in London — plans to quit the British capital city and splash out on a luxurious five-bedroom home in a Cotswolds village with her boyfriend Sam Cooper. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Story told with style

Fashion designer Ford tackles classic novel

Colin Firth and Julianne Moore star in A Single Man, the directorial debut of fashion designer Tom Ford.

ADAM NAYMAN
for Metro Canada

While it might seem a bit obvious to ask a fashion designer turned film director about esthetics, Tom Ford welcomes the question — if only to clarify his debut feature A Single Man — about the final, eventful day in the life of a California university professor (Colin Firth) grieving over the tragic death of his lover (Matthew Goode) some months earlier — is not simply an exercise in style.

"Esthetics are useless without a story worth telling," says Ford. "I'm trying to use them here to help us develop and understand a character. In this film, the use of colour suggests how George's (Firth) inner world is directly related to his outer world: how he holds himself together through this slick exterior."

A Single Man hits theatres Friday

A Single Man is adapted from a 1964 novel by Christopher Isherwood, and it retains ts source material's period setting and thematic thrust (it's easy to read between the lines of George's lecture to his students about society's fear of the unknown).

But there are a few small additions that suggest a director eager to interject himself into the proceedings — like a scene where Firth speaks to his neighbour's daughter about her younger brother Tom.

"People say write what you know," laughs Ford, "and I knew that little girl: she's my sister. I used to give my poor sister conditioning treatments all the time when we were growing up. I grafted a good deal of autobiography into this film, and the reason I felt comfortable doing that is because I felt that at my current age, I was going through some of the same things that George was. And so I felt a connection to him."

"Esthetics are useless without a story worth telling. I'm trying to use them here to ... develop and understand a character."
Fashion designer turned director Tom Ford

At the same time, Ford stresses that his main goal was to honour Isherwood's writing — and possibly to introduce the author to a younger audience unaware of his importance.

"I think that Isherwood's predictions about the dumbing-down of society have held true, but unfortunately, a lot of people don't know who he was. He's certainly one of my favourite writers, and A Single Man was absolutely groundbreaking when it came out because it presented a gay relationship in such a matter-of-fact way.

"It's shocking to think about how different the world was even just 40 years ago."

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Pretty in Pink heartthrob takes on Gossip Girl

Andrew McCarthy, the star of some of the most iconic teen movies of the '80s, is getting back to his roots by taking on the CW's sexy drama, Gossip Girl. McCarthy will direct an episode set to air in the spring. **PEOPLE.COM**

DVD picks

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

Director: David Yates

HORMONES RACE, but the magic mainly idles in this sixth Harry Potter episode, a stage-setting film in which boyish fascinations give way to manly concerns.

The boys and girls have grown into young men and women, leading to serious romantic entanglements and attendant jealousies.

There is still magic, but it all has dramatic purpose — and much of it points to the final two films, in which youthful wizard Harry (Daniel Radcliffe) and his nemesis Voldemort, the Dark Lord, will engage in a decisive battle.

Returning director David Yates and screenwriter Steve Kloves have fashioned this as more of a mystery than previous installments.

Julie & Julia

Director: Nora Ephron

NORA EPHRON'S latest is lighter than most of the French cooking featured in it.

It cross-cuts between the 1950's, watching Meryl Streep play Julia Child discovering her favourite cuisine in France, and more recent times, as Amy Adams plays Julia Powell, a Child wannabe in New York.

It's shaky pastry, held together by Streep's tremendous and entertaining portrayal of Child.

She's got the chef's voice and manners down pat, and even manages to approximate her towering height.

Another Oscar nomination seems assured for her, and also possibly for Stanley Tucci, who plays her indulgent husband.

Adams is merely adequate as Powell.

Peter Howell/for Metro Canada

Don't shake Howie's hand

Howie Mandel's autobiography looks at his life with phobias

IAN JOHNSTON
for Metro Canada

Comedian and game show host Howie Mandel says the best way to deal with his on-going mental issues has always been a good laugh.

"In comedy, nobody can hear you scream," says Mandel, who is currently promoting his autobiography Here's The Deal – Don't Touch Me, a candid look at his comedy life and his struggle with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyper-activity Disorder.

"I'm always dealing with issues — whether it be OCD or ADHD. I'm terrorized constantly by intrusive thoughts, which inform what I do. The way I deal, and have always dealt with, those darkest moments is be funny."

Mandel, who got his start more than 30 years ago at Toronto's Yuk Yuks, says he never set out to be so personal in his book.

GETTY IMAGES

Howie Mandel writes about his struggle with OCD and ADHD.

But since his mental issues dominate his life — Mandel is a "germaphobe" who avoids even shaking hands — it was difficult to ignore.

Plus — like all his career moves — he agreed to the book without thinking it through.

"I said 'yes' without thinking what the ramifications of it would be. It was suppose to be a light and funny autobiography. That was the intent. If I'd thought about how honest I'd have to be, I wouldn't have done it," he says.

"But then again, if I would have thought what are the odds of being a successful comedian in LA? I probably wouldn't have done that either."

Still, entertaining thousands at sold-out concerts and hosting Deal Or No Deal does seem an odd career choice for a guy who doesn't like to be touched.

"Well, truth is what I'm doing right now - promoting the book, going to book signings or talking to you - that's all more one-on-one than comedy. I do a concert and I really don't make direct contact with anyone unless I want to."

Still, even Mandel hadn't anticipated he'd be on a book tour during the H1NI flu crisis.

"Who would have guessed I'd be out promoting my book in the midst of this awful pandemic? And here's me out there signing books and meeting all these people. It's crazy."

Here's The Deal– Don't Touch Me by Howie Mandel is in bookstores now.

Doherty arrested in Germany

Pete Doherty has been arrested in Germany for smashing the back window of a car. The Babyshambles frontman was taken into custody for throwing a pint glass at a car outside of the bar Trinkteufel (Drink Devil) in Berlin on Saturday. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Robbie rebounds

British pop star overcomes addiction and finds happiness

TALIA SOGHOMONIAN
Metro World News

Robbie Williams became an international star as 20 per cent of boy band Take That.

But fame and fortune brought with them his well-documented personal traumas and substance abuse.

Two stints in rehab and a move to the U.S. later, and the 35-year-old singer now seems to be stable and happy in Los Angeles. With a new album Reality Killed The Video Star in stores — and the media getting over-excited about whether he has asked girlfriend Ayda Field to marry him — things have rarely looked better for Robbie.

Q You were away for three years — how's the comeback?

A It actually feels a bit strange that it is a comeback. Shakira just took four years off between records; U2 took five years off; So in relative terms, it really isn't that long. But people and the tabloids and the media seem to have scripted it as such. And how do I feel? Well a lot has been said and written in my absence, going to rehab and various tittle-tattle about my life and where my career is going so I was nervous to see the public reaction to me and my records. It was nerve-wracking and I'm only just settling back into the work.

Q Your album is a hit, so you must be relieved?

A The fans got a bit confused when I put out Rudebox. It scared the majority of them. I'm just happy that this album has given them what they wanted from me.

Q Because Rudebox was more experimental?

A It's only when you put out an album like Rudebox that you realize that you're not the kind of artist who can be experimental and have a bit of a laugh. You realize that you are part of a massive machine whose wheels can come off very easily with one wrong move.

Q Does all that expectation put even more pressure on you?

A Yes, because at home the great British press have kind of got their knives out for me. Everybody's willing for me to fail because that's what they do over there!

Q What is the biggest misconception about Robbie Williams?

A I don't really know what the biggest misconception is about me, there's quite a few out there! I'm terrified of the British press. I've moved countries to get away from them!

Q How is the move to L.A.?

A It's good. It's sunny most of the time and living is laid-back. To wake up in the sun every morning just makes everything better.

Q Did living in California help you battle your demons, away from the British press?

A I was sober in England for about three years. But it's easier to stay sober in Los Angeles, everybody talks therapy talk out there. There's a much better understanding of addiction, depression and ailments in general.

Q You found love in L.A. — did that help?

A It hasn't hindered me. She's right next to me right now in a loving caress. It's a perfect headline and I don't to say that because it sounds trite, but she certainly hasn't hindered my recovery process and my mental stability. She's wonderful!

Springsteen, De Niro given Kennedy awards

"I'm the president, but he's The Boss."

With those words, President Barack Obama greeted Bruce Springsteen on Sunday night at a White House reception before the iconic rocker was lauded with Kennedy Center Honors along with Robert De Niro, comic genius Mel Brooks, jazz pianist and composer Dave Brubeck and opera singer Grace Bumbry.

Springsteen

De Niro

A surprise list of stars will perform for the artists who are receiving the honours that recognize individuals who have defined American culture through the arts as a living memorial to John F. Kennedy. The night attracts power players from Washington and Hollywood, including the president, first lady Michelle Obama, who was seated next to Springsteen, and Vice-President Joe Biden.

About 300 guests, including Jack Black, Edward Norton, Matthew Broderick, Ben Stiller, Martin Scorsese, Sting and Philip Seymour Hoffman were at the reception.

"These performers are indeed the best," Obama said. "They are also living reminders of a single truth — and I'm going to steal a line from Michelle here — the arts are not somehow apart from our national life, the arts are the heart of our national life."

Springsteen, 60, described the award as different than other accolades.

"We worked really hard for our music to be part of American life and our fans' lives," he said. "So it's an acknowledgment that you've kind of threaded your way into the culture in a certain way."

The show will air nationwide Dec. 29 on CBS.

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metro

JOHNNY DEPP
PUBLIC ENEMIES

Matt Damon steps into the shoes of South African rugby player Francois Pienaar in Invictus.

It's all in the body

Damon trained hard for Invictus role

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News

Before Matt Damon could even think about working on the accent and muscles needed to portray South African rugby star Francois Pienaar in Invictus, he had a much more pressing concern: his height.

"The very first day I got to South Africa, Francois invited me over to his house for a gourmet dinner that he was cooking," Damon remembers about meeting the six-foot-three-inch Pienaar. "He opened the door and I looked up at him, and the first thing I ever said to Francois Pienaar in my life was, 'I look much bigger on film.'"

Though Damon is no stranger to heavy training after his work in the Bourne films, that was nothing compared to Invictus, he says.

"This is the fictionalized version of somebody's life. I don't want to let him down."
Matt Damon

"I was in better shape for this movie," Damon insists, owing the extra effort to his budding friendship with Pienaar. "This is his life. I don't want to embarrass him. If Jason Bourne looks a little flabby, that's on me. This is the fictionalization of somebody's actual life. I didn't want to let him down."

As an added challenge, his work on Invictus came right after this fall's The Informant, in which he packed on a considerable amount of flab. "I had a good time putting the weight on, and then a tough time reshaping the weight," he says.

Though physically daunting, Damon was committed to doing the film because of the story it tells: Nelson Mandela using the 1995 Rugby World Cup to unite the citizens of South Africa after apartheid.

"As actors, we react to the material that's out there. I probably just react more strongly to things that I feel have some social value," he says.

"I remember (Mandela's) Boston visit. I remember the whole world tour. In my high school, we had the 'Free Nelson Mandela' ribbons. Kids were wearing those before they knew who he was."

Damon credits director Clint Eastwood for an incredibly easy working experience.

"You walk on some movie sets and it's like walking into an emergency room. And that tension bleeds into the performances and the film itself," he says. "But Clint just leads an incredibly tight ship."

Damon was particularly impressed with Eastwood's commitment to keeping things moving.

"After you do a take, he goes, 'Well, let's not f— this up by thinking about it too much.'"

Invictus opens in theatres Friday

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Fifty years on, 3-D gets respect

Big name directors turn to genre

Since 3-D films were first introduced in the 1950s, they have functioned more as a novelty than a practical storytelling device. However, more than 50 years (and a whole lot of advances in technology) later, a new wave of 3-D is bringing forth a new frontier in filmmaking.

Re-released versions of the Toy Story films, left, and the upcoming Avatar are part of a new wave of 3-D films.

Led by veteran directors such as Robert Zemeckis and James Cameron, the medium is gaining more respect than it ever did in 3-D's second wave in the early '80s, where fuzzy knives and blurry sharks came at the audience like slow, predictable punchlines in Friday the 13th: Part III and Jaws 3-D, respectively.

Gone are the cardboard glasses with one red and one blue lens, but throughout Scrooge's journey in Zemeckis' Disney's A Christmas Carol, the 3-D effects can still be intrusive and they are not at all subtle.

However, most of the 3-D effects add substantial depth to the beautiful computer-rendered streets of London. Each detail of Ebenezer is lifelike in fusing his emotional plight with the surreal concoctions of animators to engage audiences in a whole new way.

And Avatar, Cameron's epic about humans exploiting foreign resources on another planet has been rumoured to have cost as much as $500 million to make.

Though Fox Filmed Entertainment chairman Jim Gianopulos recently dismissed that figure as "ridiculous," the film does use unprecedented camera and computer technology that many outlets are promising will change the future of filmmaking. And Gianopulos said he has no doubt the film will turn a profit, which may mean that 3-D could finally prove to be much more than a gimmick.

Three ages of 3-D

- Bwana Devil (1952): The first feature-length movie in 3-D helped launch the craze in the early '50s. Starring Robert Stack, the drama is about the building of the Uganda Railway.
- Friday the 13th: Part III (1982), Jaws 3-D (1983) and Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare (1991): The Holy trinity of 3-D cinema, these horror pics represent the apex of 3-D film technology in the '80s. Laden with unapologetic gimmicks, they attracted audiences with rollercoaster-type thrills.
- Toy Story and Toy Story 2 (2009): Launched almost 14 years ago, the recently 3-D'd double feature reminds us that a movie should rely on story not technology in order to please audiences. Still as charming and funny as ever, you almost forget about the 3-D effects as you become emotionally invested in our tiny plastic heroes.

METRO WORLD NEWS

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Pacino in the Park

Al Pacino meets William Shakespeare next summer in New York City's Central Park. The 69-year-old Pacino will portray Shylock in The Merchant of Venice, one of two offerings by the Public Theater's 2010 Shakespeare in the Park series. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vivaldi in his own image

JOHN KEILLOR
for Metro Canada

Philip Glass may be the coolest guy in Classical; last time he was in Toronto, Glass was collaborating with Leonard Cohen. This time round, the famous New York minimalist and filmscore composer has been commissioned by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra to retell Vivaldi's Four Seasons. The world premiere takes place here, at Roy Thompson Hall.

"I thought to myself, 'What if Vivaldi himself was there,'" says Glass by phone. "It's not literally or structurally like the original," says Glass. "It has synthesizer in it, which of course they didn't have in the 18th century."

Antonio Vivaldi was a Venetian monk and violinist who was nicknamed The Red Priest, partly because of his hair, but also because his playing chops were so good that they seemed suspiciously devilish. His Four Seasons included some of the fastest and most emotional passages in music. Those are aspects of the original that Glass will keep.

American fiddle virtuoso Robert McDuffie has the honour and the challenge of soloing for the premiere. Glass wrote that part specifically for him.

"I was thinking in terms of the soloist and the classical form of the concerto," explains Glass. "He (McDuffie) is a dynamic player with a lot of energy, and he's a very dramatic player too. I wanted a panorama of movements with an emotional range. Bobby's been working on his part since October now, and he mentioned it's not easy.

Composer Philip Glass unveils his reimagining of Vivaldi's Four Season tomorrow at Roy Thompson Hall.

"I said back, 'If I can't write a hard piece for you, who can I write it for?'"

Glass has always been an iconoclast. As a young man he formed his own ensemble to write music for. He financed his art habit by driving taxis and being a plumber, which gave him the freedom to composer whatever he wanted.

His style is distinct and easy to detect, often with straightforward lines melded together into burbling layers of rhythmic colour, creating a gorgeous and evolving sound, unique but not weird. It's an ideal medium for recasting Vivaldi's baroque masterpiece.

"I didn't want a replica of the original, but something much freer," says Glass. "I've written lots of concertos, and this is different. I changed the form of it to suit the piece, and the player."

This will be Glass' second violin concerto, and his first since 1987. With our own Peter Oundjian conducting the TSO, and with the composer himself in attendance, these two performances may be the hippest dates of the concert season.

Show times

- Philip Glass' The Four Seasons will be performed tomorrow at 8 p.m., and Saturday, Dec. 12, at 7:30 p.m.

Mix of Six

READING
Authors Adrienne Clarkson, Mark Kingwell and Daniel Poliquin take part in an Extraordinary Canadians presentation at 7:30 p.m., at Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton St. $20.

DANCE
Canadian Ballet Youth Ensemble presents dancers from Ballet Nacional de Cuba at the Living Arts Centre at 7 p.m.

THEATRE
My Mother's Lesbian Jewish Wiccan Wedding continues its run at the Panasonic Theatre, 651 Yonge St.

MUSICAL
The Toxic Avenger Musical continues at the Music Hall, 147 Danforth Ave.

HOLIDAY
Dianne Reeves presents Christmas Time Is Here at the Rose Theatre at 8 p.m. $50 to $70. 905-874-2800.

BASKETBALL
The Toronto Raptors play the Minnesota Timberwolves at the Air Canada Centre. At 7 p.m.

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Shakira addresses Oxford

Michael Jackson and Mother Teresa. Stephen Hawking and the Dalai Lama. And now, Shakira. The singer who is famous for hits like Hips Don't Lie joins a diverse group of luminaries when she addressed the Oxford Union Monday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EMI joins labels on new Vevo channel

MUSIC EMI Music has agreed to join other major music labels in providing music videos of its artists on Vevo, a new music video channel debuting Tuesday night on YouTube in the U.S. and Canada.

Vevo is a joint venture among Vivendi SA's Universal Music Group, Sony Corp.'s Sony Music Entertainment and Abu Dhabi Media Co. and is streamed through Google Inc.'s YouTube.

Videos also will be seen on Vevo.com and a special Vevo branded player that can be placed on social networking and other websites.

The deals with Vevo are separate from YouTube's existing relationships with the recording labels of Universal, Sony and EMI to stream music videos on its site. But Vevo said these video streams will be integrated into its service. Vevo will have its own YouTube channel.

Music fans can watch music videos from these music companies through the Vevo channel on YouTube or by searching for the artist. EMI labels to appear on Vevo include Astralwerks, Blue Note, Capitol and Virgin. EMI is a unit of EMI Group Ltd. in the U.K. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TV shows run amok in 2009

Breakout tabloid scandals seize headlines, but some shows outstanding

The biggest shows of 2009 couldn't always be contained by the TV screen.

There were breakout tabloid scandals with Jon and Kate Gosselin. A wannabe reality TV star crashed the White House. David Letterman's hanky-panky seized headlines. Oprah Winfrey grabbed the nation's attention as she began her long goodbye.

This was TV run amok.

But, in 2009, other shows proved outstanding on more manageable terms: as excellent TV shows.

They include:

BREAKING BAD (FX) Here's the cruelest premise on series TV: a high-school teacher with terminal cancer gets into the crystal-meth trade as a desperate scheme to make sure his family is financially secure after he dies. Against all odds, in its second season, this drama upped the danger level, getting even stranger, more addictive and, yes, even funnier.

CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM (HBO) This season, Curb creator-writer-star Larry David outdid himself. A creator of Seinfeld in another age, he reunited his Seinfeld cast and interlaced his old show with his current one for a brilliant story line that gave Seinfeld fans what they had craved for a decade: an acceptable finale for that beloved comedy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

Jon Hamm is frazzled ad man Don Draper in AMC's Mad Men.

DAMAGES (FX) Guest star William Hurt brought new shadings and power to this diabolical legal thriller in its riveting second season. Glenn Close and Rose Byrne stood tall as the series' leading ladies, playing at-odds, full-of-intrigue lawyers in a cutthroat litigation firm.

LOST (ABC) Another wacky, wacked-out season that showed no concern for time and space constraints and left the viewer's head reeling. The mind-boggling action on the island, and beyond, set things up for the final season in 2010 which — here's hoping — will bring everything home.

MAD MEN (AMC) Modern living 1960s style got even darker and more gripping this season as the Kennedy presidency ended in Dallas and, in New York City, ad man Don Draper's world seemed to be collapsing.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TV Babies!

"Our babies and kids are busy!" says Ann Love at The Baby Face Agency. "In ads, movies, and modelling, some earned $30,000."

"We need cute babies and toddlers and boys and girls up to 16!"

Phones are open now for parents to list babies and kids. Dial (416)

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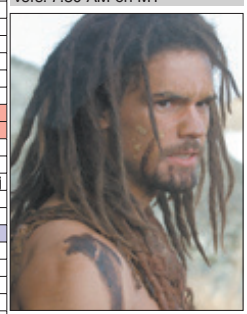
to	Vu	SD	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/8/09 primetime	265	353	2	TVO	Parks	Recreat. Eden	The Agenda With Steve Paikin		East West 101 "Just Cargo"		The Virus Empire (N)		Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	NCIS "Toxic" (HDTV)		NCIS: Los Angeles		The Good Wife "Home"		News Final
	215	343	4	OMN1	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	Omni News: Italian Edition (N)		Vivere V	Omni News:	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
	210	302	6	CBC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town		Being Erica (N) (DVS)		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	214	344	7	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		The Biggest Loser The "Biggest Loser" is announced.				The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	212	313	8	CTV	etalk	Hollywood	So You Think You Can Dance (HDTV) (N)				Law & Order: Special Victims		News
	218	345	11	CHCH	*Home for the Holidays* ★★ (1995, Comedy) Holly Hunter.				*Pretty in Pink* ★★★ (1986, Romance-Comedy), Jon Cryer				News at 11 (N)
	-	-	14	-	Family Guy	The Office	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	King	Bhangra
	213	326	15	SUN	The Insider (N)	George Lopez	World's Most Amazing Videos		To Serve and Protect		The Insider	Hitchcock Pres	Becker
	-	387	16	CBS	Inside Edition	Hollywood	NCIS "Toxic" (HDTV)		NCIS: Los Angeles		The Good Wife "Home"		News 4 at 11
	-	385	17	NBC	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	The Biggest Loser The "Biggest Loser" is announced.				The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	-	386	18	ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Charlie Brown	Prep- Landing	Scrubs	Better Off Ted	the forgotten "Pilot"		News
	219	346	20	ACH-B	Degrassi: TNG	TMZ (N)	*The Bourne Identity* ★★★ (2002, Suspense) Matt Damon, Chris Cooper.					Comedy Inc.	A News
	-	-	28	FOX	Judge Judy	Two/Half Men	So You Think You Can Dance (HDTV) (N)				Seinfeld	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons
	-	388	61	PBS	PBS NewsHour	Foot in Grave	Brain Fitness Frontiers			Science of Healing	With Dr. Esther		Business Rpt.
	297	652	330	WPX	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	90210 (HDTV) (N)		Melrose Place (N)		PIX News at Ten	Tong.	Two/Half Men
	296	654	331	SBK	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Law & Order: SVU		WBZ News (N)	Frasier	The Office	Name Is Earl	Frasier
	298	653	332	TLA	The Tyra Show		According-Jim	Family Guy	KTLA News	KTLA News	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	90210 (N)
news	502	390	26	NW	Connect Today's biggest stories. (N)				CBC News: The National		CBC News: the fifth estate		National
	500	500	33	CNN	CNN Tonight (N)		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
	509	504	79	CNB	Kudlow Report (Live)		Coca-Cola: The Real Story		Porn: Business of Pleasure		Biography on CNBC (N)		Mad Money
sports	405	417	22	net	UFC: Access	UEFA Champions League Soccer Marseille vs. Real Madrid. (HDTV)					Sportsnet Connected		Hockey Central
	400	400	30	TSN	That's Hockey!	SportsCentre	Curling 2009 Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings. (HDTV) (Live)						SportsCentre
	411	457	58	OLN	Ghost Hunters International		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Ghost Hunters International		Bounty Hunter
	417	406	81	SC	Pass Time	Pass Time	Monster Jam (HDTV)		Super Bikes!	Challenge	Dangerous Drives (HDTV)		Pass Time
family	551	542	25	YTV	The Legend of Frosty the Snowman			Hates Chris	8 Simple Rules	What I Like	Family Biz	Prank Patrol	Adrenaline Proj
	554	544	45	TEL	Scooby-Doo	Total Drama	Total Drama	6TEEN	Futurama	King of the Hill	American Dad	Futurama	Robot Chicken
	556	540	51	FAM	Sonny Chance	Zack & Cody	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School	Cory in House	That's-Raven
cable variety	602	567	27	W	Friends	Friends	*Borrowed Hearts* (1997, Drama) Roma Downey.				*Crazy for Christmas* (2005, Drama)		
	570	580	29	MM	Gossip Girl (HDTV) (N)		Love Court	Jonas Brothers	To Be Announced		MuchNews	Love Court	MuchTop11
	615	520	31	A&E	Criminal Minds (HDTV)		Criminal Minds (HDTV)		Paranormal	Paranormal	Paranormal	Paranormal	Paranormal
	700	800	35	TLN	Centrovetrine	Sky TG 24	Serie A	David Rocco	RIS - Delitti Imperfetti		George Lopez	George Lopez	Lopez Tonight
	571	581	36	MMM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		I Want to Work for Diddy		Entourage	Wild 'n Out	mmtop10.ca
	575	583	38	CMT	Funniest Home Videos		Reba	Reba	According-Jim	According-Jim	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Wilsons
	616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		*Voices* (2007, Suspense) Amy Acker.				Bones (Part 1 of 2)		NCIS
	620	523	40	BVO	Constantinople Trio (N)		*A Hard Day's Night* ★★★ (1964, Musical Comedy)				At the Concert Hall (N)		Law & Order
	601	562	41	SLC	Rich Bride, Poor Bride		Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	Bulging Brides	Bulging Brides	ET Canada
	522	506	43	HIS	Ancient Discoveries		Cities of the Underworld		Cities of the Underworld		Ultimate Engineering		Crime Stories
	625	548	44	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Jeff Dunham	Blue Collar TV	Daily Show
	600	564	46	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	HGTV's Top 10	Design Inc.	Pure Design	Genevieve	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes-Homes
	294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	House-Payne	House-Payne	The Cosby Show: A Look Back				Law/Ord SVU
	576	582	49	BET	106 & Park	*Higher Learning* ★★★ (1995, Drama) Omar Epps, Kristy Swanson.					Monica: Still	Monica: Still	Mo'Nique
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Star Trek: Voyager		Medium (N)		Fringe "Snakehead" (N)		InnerSpace (N)
	581	566	52	MTV	Peak Season	After	True Life Young mothers.		Catching Up: Teen Mom		Teen Mom (N)		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	'70s Show	'70s Show	The Outer Limits		ET Canada	Switch	Family Guy	'70s Show	'70s Show
	603	561	56	FOOD	Ricardo	Exotic	Restaurant Makeover		The F Word (N)		Good Eats		Iron Chef Am.
	261	394	60	V	Murder, She Wrote		Hallelujah!	Dinnerladies	*The Nativity* ★★ (1978, Drama) Madeline Stowe, John Shea.				Christmas
	621	527	63	STR	Look-A-Like	TMZ	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		The View (HDTV) (N)		The Dr. Oz Show (N)		TMZ
	553	546	65	TRE	Dora's Christmas Carol		Waybuloo	Franklin	Little Bear	Maggie-Beast	Babar	Zigby	Max & Ruby
	526	507	249	VIVA	Cold Case "The House"		Missing (Part 1 of 2)		The Closer "Borderline"		Cold Case "The House"		Psychic Inv.
	300	601	301	M1	*Down to the Dirt* (2008, Drama) Hugh Dillon, Robert Joy.				*10,000 B.C.* ★ (2008, Adventure) Steven Strait.				*My Winnipeg*
	305	612	306	PIX	(6:50) *The Claim* ★★★ (2000, Drama) Peter Mullan.				*Saving Silverman* ★ (2001, Comedy)				(10:40) *Scream of Stone*
	520	146	-	DISC	Daily Planet (N)		How It's Made	How It's Made	Destroyed	Destroyed	Time Warp (N)		Daily Planet
	637	-	-	TVLND	Red Green	Red Green	Fantasy Island		Hart to Hart		Andy Griffith	Phil Silvers	Bizarre
	605	-	-	FASH	Staying Young in Hollywood		FashionTele	RAW	Canada's Next Top Model		Australia's Next Top Model		Pretty Wicked

critics' corner

10,000 B.C.
Just as the title indicates, prehistoric times come to life again in director Roland Emmerich's drama that strives to balance human drama with special effects depicting ancient creatures. Steven Strait plays the hero of the saga, who strives to save his true love and other members of his tribe from slavers. 7:30 AM on M1



Better Off Ted
Ted and his colleagues at Veridian return for a second season as the company begins matchmaking employees based on their genetic compatibility, hoping to save on the health insurance bills associated with imperfectly bred children. Taye Diggs guest stars in the new episode "Love Blurts." 9:30 PM on ABC

The Good Wife
Alicia finds herself immersed in her old life when she is asked to represent the teenage son of a former friend, an assignment that requires her to return to her old neighborhoodr in "You Can't Go Home Again." 10 PM on GTV CBS

TIFF taps top Canadian films

MOVIES The Toronto International Film Festival yesterday announced the Top 10 Canadian feature films of 2009. Ruba Nadda's romantic drama Cairo Time, starring Patricia Clarkson, and Quebec filmmaker Xavier Dolan's J'ai tué ma mere were among the picks. Public screenings of the films with introductions and Q&A sessions will be held Jan. 14 through 21 at TIFF Cinematheque.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

In brief

MUSIC Daniel Powter, whose hit Bad Day reigned on top of the Billboard pop charts for five weeks in 2006, was named as the decade's top one-hit wonder by Billboard.

NEWSCAST Diane Sawyer says this week is her last as co-anchor of ABC's Good Morning America as she prepares to replace Charles Gibson on the network's World News.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenya's Style

Kenya Hunt

Exclusively at metronews.ca/globalstyle

Michael admits to drug use

George Michael has admitted to smoking crack cocaine. The former Wham! singer has spoken out about his use of the Class A drug and claims he has smoked it "once or twice," femalefirst.co.uk reports. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Brown still 'embarrassed'

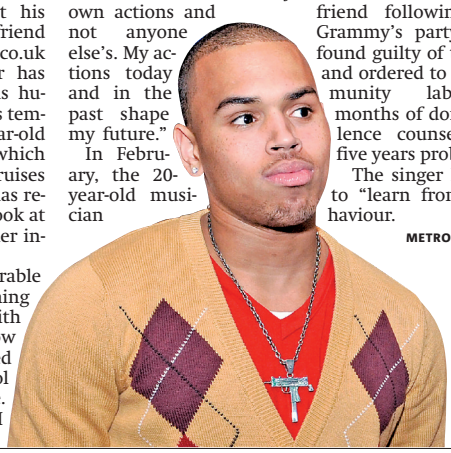
POOR BABY Chris Brown is "embarrassed" about his assault on his ex-girlfriend Rihanna, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The singer has spoken out about his humiliation at losing his temper with the 21-year-old beauty in an attack which left her covered in bruises and bite marks and has revealed he still can't look at the photographs of her injuries.

He said: "It's unbearable to view. It's something that I have to live with every time they show it. I'm embarrassed that I couldn't control my anger at that time. It's a reminder that I have to be in control of my own actions and not anyone else's. My actions today and in the past shape my future."

In February, the 20-year-old musician lashed out at his ex-girlfriend following a pre-Grammy's party. He was found guilty of the assault and ordered to 80 of community labour, 12 months of domestic violence counselling and five years probation.

The singer has vowed to "learn from" his behaviour.

METRO WORLD NEWS

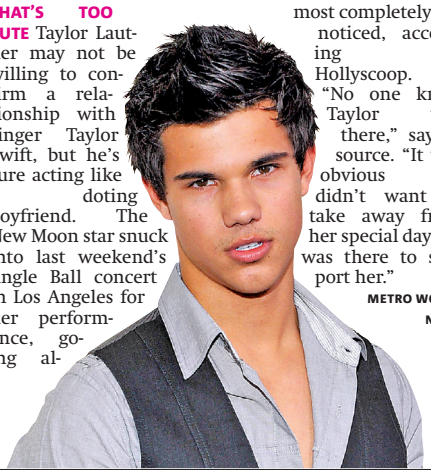


Teen wolf likes to dote

THAT'S TOO CUTE Taylor Lautner may not be willing to confirm a relationship with singer Taylor Swift, but he's sure acting like a doting boyfriend. The New Moon star snuck into last weekend's Jingle Ball concert in Los Angeles for her performance, going almost completely unnoticed, according to Hollyscoop.

"No one knew Taylor was there," says a source. "It was obvious he didn't want to take away from her special day. He was there to support her."

METRO WORLD NEWS



Celebrity tweets

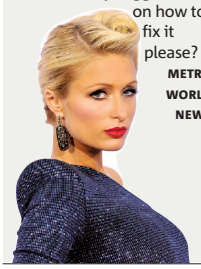
Chris Brown gets a kick out of clumsy paparazzi, Diablo Cody likes to travel prepared, and Paris Hilton uses Twitter for tech support,

• @MechanicalDummy in the airport and camera guy asked me stupid questions then ran into a pole.. hella funny

• @diablocody Don't ever try to bring novelty brass knuckles on a plane. Even if they're pink. I speak from experience.

• @ParisHilton I was at dinner last night and someone spilled their drink on my blackberry and now it's broken. :(Any suggestions on how to fix it please?

METRO WORLD NEWS



Spears family plays down Courtney claims

BIG CHANGES? Britney Spears' family is going on the defensive, denying wild claims made by Courtney Love that Britney was molested as a young girl by father Jamie Spears, according to Rush & Molloy.

Also, femalefirst.co.uk is reporting Britney Spears' conservatorship could end soon. The 28-year-old singer's father has met with lawyers.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Joel-Brinkley daughter at home

RECOVERING The daughter of singer Billy Joel and model Christie Brinkley is now at her father's home to recover after being hospitalized over the weekend for what's being reported as a reaction to herbal medication, according to New York Newsday.

People.com reports Alexa Ray Joel, 23, had taken several pills of the homeopathic medication Traumeel after a breakup with her boyfriend of several years, and was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City's Greenwich Village, according to various reports.

"She became worried about breathing, which is why 911 was called," one source told People.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Weezer singer in bus crash

HOSPITALIZED Weezer singer Rivers Cuomo was hospitalized after a tour bus crash in upstate New York left him complaining of ribcage pain, according to the Albany Times Union. One other person was taken to the hospital. Cuomo's wife and 2-year-old daughter were on board but were both left unharmed.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Tough year for 'Malcolm' mom

GOING HER OWN WAY It's been a "very hard" year for Jane Kaczmarek, who announced in June she is divorcing her husband of 16 years, Bradley Whitford. The Malcom in the Middle star told People she finds solace in working on the foundation the couple co-founded, Clothes Off Our Back.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Tattoo honours pal

OR SO SHE SAYS... The world seemed up in arms after photographers snapped Miley Cyrus in a hot pink bikini that prominently displayed her new tattoo that reads "Just Breathe," popeater.com reports. Well, according to Perez Hilton, the 17-year-old's ink actually honours the memory of one of her close friends that passed away due to Cystic Fibrosis over three years ago. Apparently "Just Breathe" is the slogan for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Last week, popeaters.com asked its readers to vote on whether Cyrus should have a tattoo at 17. More than 56 per cent of 84,700 voters said she was too young, and it bothered them. Cyrus' step into the spotlight has led to much criticism, and she's had enough. During an interview with the AP in September, Cyrus admitted that she's made her fair share of missteps but wishes the public would have a little more respect for her privacy.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

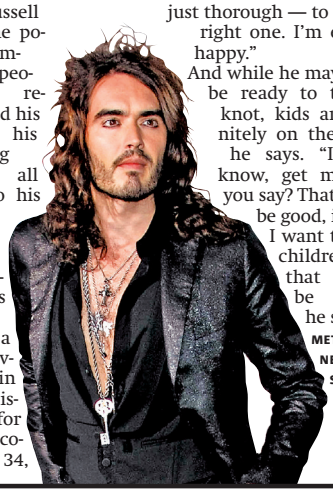
Russell Brand: Family man

OR SO HE SAYS... That cad-about-town Russell Brand is long gone. In his place: Russell Brand, the potential family man, people.com reports. And his shedding his wandering ways is all thanks to his rumored girlfriend, Katy Perry, says Brand.

"It was a deep craving within me – I mistook it for lust," the comedian, 34, told Britain's GMTV. "I thought I was promiscuous, but it turns out I was just thorough — to get the right one. I'm ever so happy."

And while he may never be ready to tie the knot, kids are definitely on the table, he says. "I don't know, get married, you say? That would be good, isn't it? I want to have children – that would be good," he said.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



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Today Variable 1°/ 0°

Wednesday 90% Rain and snow 4° / -6°

Thursday 40% Flurries -2° / -7°

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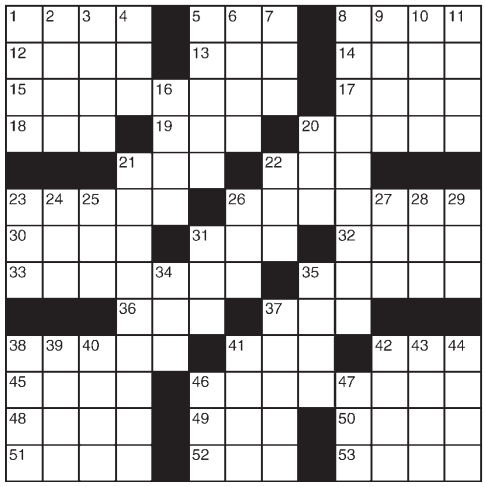
Take Five

For more delicious Metro recipes, visit: **metronews.ca/food**



Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

		1				2		
			4		5			
7	5						8	9
		7	3		2	9		
2	4						3	1
		9	5		1	6		
3	9						6	7
			7		8			
		8				5		

ACROSS

1 Complain
5 Fido's reply
8 Cupola
12 Sandwich cookie
13 Spelling contest
14 Concept
15 Show to be false
17 Drunkards
18 Perched
19 Type measures
20 Aerosol output
21 Newcomer to society
22 By way of
23 August forecast word
26 Soldier
30 Eye part
31 Former Saturn model
32 Race place
33 Soda purchase
35 Cruising
36 Whopper
37 Pigpen
38 Needed liniment
41 Carnival city
42 Stitch
45 Circus performer?
46 Send
48 Some deer
49 Eggs
50 Give a hoot
51 Lecherous look
52 Slithery fish
53 Verifiable

DOWN

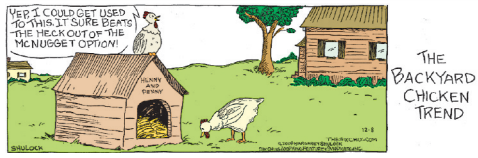
1 Pollacks' kin
2 Met melody
3 Take ten
4 Burst
5 Mushroom cloudmaker
6 Guns the engine
7 Doctor's due
8 Difference
9 Stench
10 Transcending (Prefix)
11 Simple
16 Clari-netist's sliver
20 Madam's mate
21 Annoy
22 Forefront
23 That man's
24 Swiss canton
25 Blend
26 Stir-fry vessel
27 — and outs
28 Praise in verse
29 Scandinavian rug style
31 Hockey venue
34 Help
35 On
37 Rope fiber
38 Roundish hairstyle
39 Block the pipes
40 Shoe part
41 Split apart
42 Celebrity
43 Beige
44 Roller coaster shout
46 Anonymous John
47 Performance

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

1	3	6	5	7	8	9	4	2
8	5	2	9	1	4	3	6	7
7	9	4	6	2	3	8	5	1
4	8	5	7	3	1	6	2	9
3	7	9	2	5	6	4	1	8
2	6	1	8	4	9	7	3	5
9	1	7	4	6	5	2	8	3
5	4	8	3	9	2	1	7	6
6	2	3	1	8	7	5	9	4

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca



Metro Recipe of the Day

Salmon Puffs with Tzatziki

INGREDIENTS:

3/4 lb (375 g) pack pre-rolled puff pastry
5 1/3 oz (160 g) skinless salmon fillet, cut into 1/2-in. (1 cm) squares
1/4 lb (125 g) frozen fava beans
1 oz (30 g) fresh dill, chopped
1 oz (30 g) snipped fresh chives
1 egg, beaten
1/2 cup (125 mL) ricotta cheese
1/2 cucumber
1 cup (250 mL) plain yogourt

METHOD:

1. Remove pastry from fridge. Preheat oven to 460°F (240°C). Put salmon squares in bowl and add frozen fava beans and herbs. Season and mix well.

2. Unroll pastry, then cut into four 7 x 3 1/3 -in. (17.5 x 8.5 cm) pieces. Brush egg lightly all over pastry. Mound salmon mixture in centres of pastry pieces. Place ricotta cheese on each mound of filling. Fold long ends of pastry up to meet over filling and pinch together at top. Press sides together to seal.

3. Transfer pastries to baking sheet and brush with egg. Bake until puffed and golden.

4. Meanwhile, grate cucumber into sieve and press out excess moisture over sink. Mix cucumber into yogourt. Transfer tzatziki to serving bowl and serve with hot salmon puffs.

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Someone who is jealous of your popularity and success will go out of their way to make life difficult for you today.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
You may want to be honest but the planets warn you will have to bend the truth a little. Most likely you will do so to protect someone's feelings.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Avoid get-rich-quick schemes because they will cost you a lot more than they make. Keep them at arm's length.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
It is of the utmost importance today that you control your temper, no matter how much others may try to provoke you.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
If you promise something today you will have to keep it come what may, so think twice before making that pledge.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
What you have been worrying about these past few weeks was not worth the time or the effort.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Your confidence may have taken a dive of late but the way things pan out today will convince you there was never very much to worry about.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Advice will come at you from all directions today, making it difficult to work out who is talking sense and who is talking nonsense.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
You are strongly advised to keep your money in your pocket today because once you start to flash the cash there will be no stopping you.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
Keep a low profile over the next 24 hours and keep looking forward to a time when you can show what you can do.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Give voice to your feelings but don't let all your resentments come to the surface at the same time.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Steer clear of people who tend to talk about nothing else but their aches and pains and what's gone wrong in their life.

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If you are a parent, family member or friend of a child from a separated or divorced family, this holiday season give the gift that will inspire and promote a sense of community within that child.

For more information please contact us at www.willabbi.com or 416.628.4074

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WillAbbi CAMPS

Today in history

1660 – Margaret Hughes becomes the first actress to appear on an English public stage, playing the role of Desdemona in a production of Shakespeare's play Othello.
1941 – Second World War: The Japanese invade Hong Kong, British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies.
1980 – John Lennon is shot and killed by Mark David Chapman in front of The Dakota apartment building in New York City.
1993 – The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is signed into law by U.S. President Bill Clinton.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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NEW

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DOWN	BI-WEEKLY
$0	$105
$1,000	$98
$3,000	$82

$3,975
CASH CREDIT
Including $1,000 Holiday Bonus

HWY: 5.8L/100 km (49 mpg)
CITY: 8.2L/100 km (34 mpg)‡

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INCLUDES • **Automatic Transmission** • **Air Conditioning** • **Power Windows and Door Locks** • Power Sunroof • Remote Keyless Entry System • Cruise Control • OnStar® with 1-year of the Safe & Sound Plan¥

SE model shown with Podium Edition Package††

2010 PONTIAC G5 SE

Coupe or Sedan

INCLUDES • 155 HP 2.2L ECOTEC® VVT Engine • **Automatic Transmission** • **Air Conditioning** • **Power Windows, Door Locks and Mirrors** • 60/40 Split-Folding Rear Seatbacks • Driver and Front-passenger Frontal Air Bags • Head Curtain Side-impact Air Bags • Auxiliary Audio Input Jack • Remote Keyless Entry System • 16-in. Wheels • 4-wheel ABS

NEW

CASH PURCHASE PRICE
$15,648* + **0%** FINANCING FOR 36 MONTHS‡

OR

$112 AT **5.99%** FINANCING‡

BI-WEEKLY/72 MONTHS $1,000 DOWN PAYMENT
FREIGHT & TAXES NOT INCLUDED

DOWN	BI-WEEKLY
$0	$120
$1,000	$112
$3,000	$97

$4,350
CASH CREDIT
Including $1,000 Holiday Bonus

HWY: 5.9L/100 km (48 mpg)
CITY: 8.7L/100 km (32 mpg)‡

AWD model shown††

2010 PONTIAC VIBE

INCLUDES • 132 HP 1.8L 4-cyl. VVTi Engine • **StabiliTrak® Electronic Stability Control System** • **Air Conditioning with Clean Air Filter** • **Power Windows, Door Locks and Mirrors** • 60/40 Split-Folding Rear Seatbacks • Driver and Front-passenger Frontal Air Bags • Head Curtain Side-impact Air Bags • Auxiliary Audio Input Jack • Remote Keyless Entry System • Cruise Control • 4-wheel Disc Brakes with ABS and Brake Assist • OnStar® with 1-year of the Safe & Sound Plan¥

CASH PURCHASE PRICE
$17,498*

OR

$126 AT **5.99%** FINANCING‡

BI-WEEKLY/72 MONTHS $1,000 DOWN PAYMENT
FREIGHT & TAXES NOT INCLUDED

DOWN	BI-WEEKLY
$0	$134
$1,000	$126
$3,000	$111

$2,500
CASH CREDIT
Including $1,000 Holiday Bonus

HWY: 6.2L/100 km (46 mpg)
CITY: 7.8L/100 km (36 mpg)‡

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+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $204
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Departure tax: 26 USD cash, paid locally

Samana
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Varadero
Sirenis La Salina Varadero Beach Resort • 4★
All-Inclusive • Standard rm.
Jan. 3–25 • 1 wk.

1st passenger $1349
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $222
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally
Please add $100 for Sat. and Sun. departures

2nd passenger $0
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $222
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally

Puerto Vallarta / Riviera Nayarit
Barceló La Jolla de Mismaloya • 4★
All-Inclusive • Deluxe junior suite
Jan. 4–18 • 1 wk.

1st passenger $1650
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $273
Prices based on Mon. – Fri. departures

2nd passenger $0
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $273

Punta Cana
Barceló Dominican Beach • 3 1/2★
All-Inclusive • Standard rm.
Jan. 10, 17 & 24 • 1 wk.

1st passenger $1499
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $307

2nd passenger $0
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $307

Holguin
Sirenis Playa Turquesa • 4★
All-Inclusive • Superior rm.
Jan. 2–23 • 1 wk.

1st passenger $1359
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $222
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally
Please add $100 for Sat. departures

2nd passenger $0
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $222
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally

Ixtapa / Zihuatanejo
Barceló Ixtapa Beach • 4★
All-Inclusive • Standard rm.
Jan. 9 & 16 • 1 wk.

1st passenger $1789
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $278

2nd passenger $0
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $278

La Romana
Iberostar Hacienda Dominicus • 4 1/2★
All-Inclusive • Standard rm.
Jan. 16 • 1 wk.

1st passenger $1789
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $307

2nd passenger $0
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $307

Santa Clara
Meliá Las Dunas • 4★
All-Inclusive • Standard rm.
Jan. 2–16 • 1 wk.

1st passenger $1379
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $222
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally
Please add $100 for Sat. departures

2nd passenger $0
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $222
Departure tax: 25 CUC cash, paid locally

Los Cabos
Barceló Los Cabos Palace Deluxe • 5★
All-Inclusive • Junior suite
Jan. 9 & 16 • 1 wk.

1st passenger $1899
+Taxes & other fees (including service charges): $274

2nd passenger $0
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